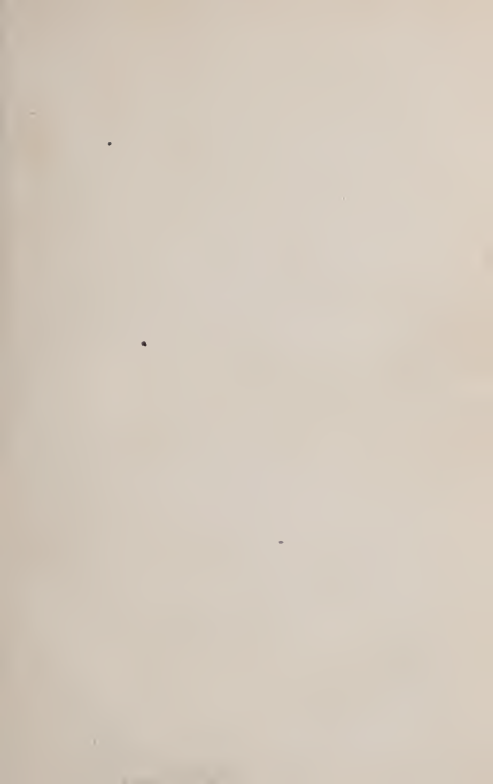
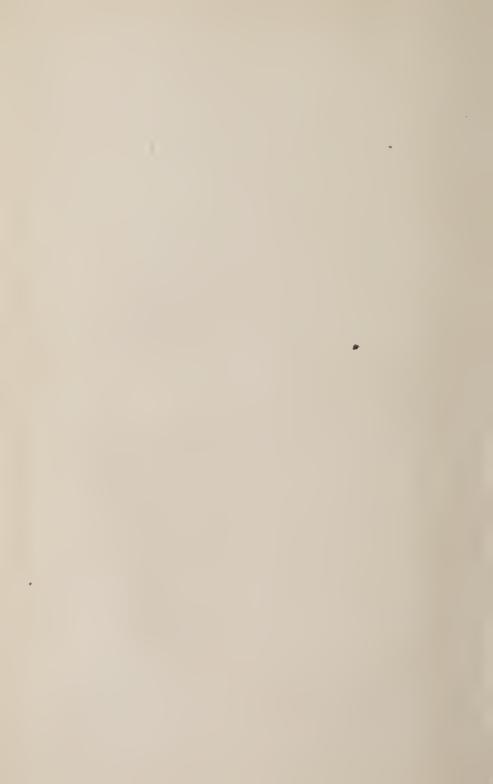






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HISTORY OF  
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND





Text-Books of Religious Instruction

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HISTORY  
OF THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

BY THE

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# HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

## CHAPTER I

### *THE PRELIMINARY HISTORY*

THE Church of England is a portion of that **Corporate Organisation of Christianity** which our Lord Jesus Christ founded, which His Apostles built up, which was gradually extended by them and their successors from city to city and from land to land, and which has lived in unbroken continuity to the present time. At what time, by what channels, this Divine Organisation was extended to this land, is the subject of this first chapter.

#### BRITAIN BEFORE THE ROMAN CONQUEST.

Some previous knowledge of **the general history of the country** is necessary to a right appreciation of the introduction of this new element into its life.

About 330 B.C. one Pytheas was sent by the merchants of the Greek colony at Marseilles to explore northern Europe in the interests of their commerce. He paid two visits to the island, probably to the south-eastern part of it, and reported that the people had plenty of corn, which they threshed in barns, and made bread

and ale. Three centuries later another Greek, Posidonius (with whom Cicero studied at Rhodes), extended his travels to the island, probably visiting its south-western peninsula, since he describes the way in which the people worked their tin. It is supposed to be on his authority that Diodorus Siculus states that the Britons grew corn, cutting off the ears and storing them in underground receptacles, whence they were fetched daily and dressed for consumption, and that they lived in mean dwellings made of reeds and wood. Numismatists have collected, mostly in the southern parts of England, specimens of a native coinage in both gold and silver, which extends back to a century and a half or two centuries before the Christian era; it is copied from the Gallic coinage, which in its turn was copied from the Stater of Philip of Macedon.

**Julius Cæsar**, after his conquest of Gaul, contemplated the extension of Roman dominion to this island. In the autumn of 55 B.C. he made a recognisance in force, which was followed in the next summer by a more serious invasion. He won several battles and reduced his opponents to sue for peace and to promise tribute; but he probably found the resistance more obstinate than he had anticipated, and concluded that the acquisition of the island was not worth what it would cost in men, money, and time; before winter he withdrew from the island, and made no further attempt at its conquest.

At this time the great majority of the inhabitants were Celts of two families of the race, Gaels and Britons, one represented to us by the modern Highlanders, the other by the Welsh; there may have been some remnants of an earlier Iberian race surviving here and there among the Gaels. Later immigrants of Belgic race occupied the south-east of the country, who were in

the condition of civilisation indicated by extensive corn-lands, mechanical arts (war-chariots), roads, and a coinage.

Of the Religion of the Britons much has been conjectured by modern antiquaries, but little is certainly known. They had deities whom Cæsar, after the manner of his age, identifies with certain of the Roman deities, an extensive nature-worship, and numerous superstitions. They practised human sacrifice. An order of Druids served both as ministers of religion and judges, and were regarded with great veneration. It is from Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xvi. 95) that we get the picturesque story of their cultus of the mistletoe.

After the abandonment of the island by Julius, no further attempt was made against the independence of Britain for the next hundred years. During those hundred years Gaul was being rapidly and thoroughly Romanised ; and by means of the social and commercial intercourse between Gaul and Britain, Roman civilisation was being introduced into this island.

#### BRITANNIA.

In the year 43 A.D. **Claudius** undertook the conquest of Britain. A great battle at Camulodunum (Colchester), at which the Emperor was present in person, gave him possession of the south-eastern portion of the island, several of the native kings submitting and being continued in their princedoms. The conquest was gradually extended by the imperial generals westward and northward, until by the year 84 A.D. the whole of the island as far as the line between the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Clyde had been subdued ; here the Roman advance was arrested, and the north of the island retained its independence. The Romans pursued

their habitual policy in proceeding at once to Romanise their new conquest. They made roads, built numerous cities, cultivated the lands, and encouraged commerce. The better classes of the native inhabitants adopted the Roman language and manners. It was perhaps the most remote and rude of the provinces, but for nearly 400 years Southern Britain was an integral part of the Roman Empire.



## CHAPTER II

### *THE PLANTING OF THE CHURCH IN BRITANNIA*

THE inquiry, when was the Church planted in this country? introduces us first to a number of legendary stories, which, though rejected as unhistorical, should be known by the student, since they enter into the national literature.

**The Glastonbury Legend** is that Joseph of Arimathea, accompanied by Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary and others, soon after our Lord's Ascension left the Holy Land, and after a stay in Gaul came to Britain, bringing with him the Holy Grail;<sup>1</sup> that he preached in the Isle of Avalon, and confirmed the truth of his teaching by a miracle—he struck his staff of thorn into the ground, which at once burst into leaf and blossom, like Aaron's rod, and took root and grew into a tree; and that on the spot he founded the church of Glastonbury. A remarkable fact has kept the story alive in the memories, if not in the belief, of many people to this day. It is said that it was at Christmas time that the miraculous thorn blossomed; and there are still thorn-trees at Glastonbury, and others scattered about the country, said to be its offshoots, which do bear leaves, and sometimes buds if not blossoms, at Christmas-

<sup>1</sup> The vessel in which our Lord consecrated the Eucharist.

time. Glastonbury is undoubtedly a British foundation, which lived through the West Saxon conquest, and the story is no doubt founded on British legends; but William of Malmesbury is the earliest (about A.D. 1135) written authority for it, and the historian pronounces it to be purely mythical.

**The Legend of Bran the Blessed.**—The Welsh Triads (collected in the thirteenth century, but conveying the traditions of an earlier time) assert that **Bran, the father of Caractacus**, having been detained by Claudius for seven years in Rome as a hostage for his son, was there with some companions converted by St. Paul, and on his release carried the faith back to Britain and planted the Church here. The fact that St. Paul's first imprisonment in Rome coincides with the last two years of the residence there of the father of Caractacus gives a certain plausibility to the story; but it cannot be accepted as historical; it rests solely on the testimony of the Welsh legend, and is inconsistent with the narratives of the historians Tacitus and Dio Cassius.

There seems at first sight more solid foundation for the statement that **Lucius**, king of the Britons, having heard of Christianity, sent an embassy to Eleutherius, Bishop of Rome, asking to have the Gospel sent to him, and that his ambassadors, having been instructed and ordained, returned and founded the Church in Wales. The *Catalogus Pontificum Romanorum* contains an entry under the name of Eleutherius, that in his time (177–190 A.D.) “Lucius, king of Britain, was converted;” the *Book of Llandaff* gives the names of Lucius's ambassadors and claims them as the founders of the Welsh Sees. But when we examine the story, we find that the notice in the *Catalogus* is one of many additional notes which were interpolated into it in the year 530 A.D.

The Book of Llandaff is a compilation of the twelfth century, though much of its legendary matter is of earlier date. Gildas (sixth century), the great authority for the history of the British Church, makes no mention of Lucius. Bede accepted the note in the Catalogue of Pontiffs and introduced it into his "Ecclesiastical History." Nennius in the ninth century expanded it into the conversion of the whole of Britain. Between that time and the twelfth century it came to be connected with North Wales. The whole story rests upon the note interpolated 300 years after the supposed event in the Catalogue of Roman Pontiffs, and cannot be accepted as historical.

If some controversialists have reason for encouraging the belief that the Church of Britain is an offshoot of the Church of Rome, their opponents have equal motive for trying to show that the island owes its Christianity to St. Paul.

During St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, they point out, the apostle expressed an intention of travelling into Spain.<sup>1</sup> There are five years after his liberation during which we have no history of his labours; and during that time he *may* very possibly have visited the West, but there is no evidence that he did. The notices of early writers are tantalisingly vague. St. Clement of Rome says that the apostle extended his labours to the "utmost bounds of the west;" this is a phrase which, in writers of the time, often included Britain, but it does not necessarily do so, and St. Clement's statement would be true if St. Paul had done no more than fulfil his intention of travelling into Spain. Other vague expressions of a similar inconclusive kind occur. Eusebius

<sup>1</sup> Romans xv. 28.

(325 A.D.), after speaking of the spreading of the Gospel among the Romans, Persians, Armenians, Parthians, Indians, and Scythians, adds: "Some passed over the ocean to those which are called the British Isles;" but this statement is a summary of the progress of Christianity in early times which would be quite consistent with its introduction into Britain a century or so before the time of writing; in fact, Armenia, which is included in the summary, was not converted till the end of the third century. Venantius Fortunatus (560 A.D.) and Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (560 A.D.), are usually quoted as the first who expressly state that St. Paul visited Britain in person; but what Fortunatus says is only that the teaching of St. Paul (*stylus ille*) spread to Britain and *Ultima Thule*; and though Sophronius is quoted by the Magdeburg centuriators as bringing St. Paul to Britain, there is nothing to that effect in the printed fragments of his writings, and if there were, his authority would be of no value. There are no traces in our ancient ecclesiastical history, legends, or antiquities of any special veneration for St. Paul. On the whole, there is absolutely no authority whatever for the theory that St. Paul visited Britain.

Having got these legends out of the way, the next step is to look for trustworthy evidence of the first planting of the Church in this country. The only regular intercourse between Britain and the rest of the world at this period was through Gaul; and it is likely that the Church, in passing from country to country, would come to Britain through Gaul.

The Church was not planted in Gaul till the middle of the second century. Its existence at that date at Vienne and Lugdunum (Lyons) is known to us through a letter which the Church of Lyons addressed to the

Churches of Asia and Phrygia, giving a detailed account of a persecution which it had lately suffered. Vienne was an ancient Roman colony, Lugdunum was a more recent town, founded by merchants from Asia Minor as an emporium of commerce at the junction of the great rivers Saone and Rhone. It looks as if these Asian merchants, being Christians, had requested that a church should be founded among them; the whole narrative shows that it had only recently been planted; Pothinus was its first bishop, Irenæus, the pupil of St. Polycarp, the pupil of the apostle St. John, was its priest, and Sanctus its deacon.

There is no reason to suppose that any missionaries had previously passed through Gaul, without leaving any trace of their passage, to found the Church in Britain. It has been suggested that some fugitives from the persecution at Lyons may have fled to Britain, but the whole narrative makes it highly improbable. Some other churches were founded in Central Gaul soon afterwards, but none farther north than Lyons.

About a century later, a fresh outburst of missionary zeal led to the planting of some churches in Northern Gaul; and it is possible that the unexhausted force of this wave of progress crossed the Channel and planted the Church in Britain. On a general survey of the condition of the world at the period, and of the way in which the Church was propagated in these western countries, it is most likely that the Church came to Britain by way of Gaul, very unlikely that it should be planted here before it was planted in Northern Gaul, and probable that it was actually planted here about the middle of the third century, as a result of the missionary movement in Northern Gaul at that date; this would give time for an extension in harmony with the subsequent history.

We have the testimony of the contemporary historians, Eusebius and Lactantius, for the fact that there were Christians and Christian temples in Britain at the time of the Diocletian persecution (303 A.D.), and that some of the officers of the Cæsar Constantius were Christians. Bede records the tradition of martyrdoms at Verulam, Chester, and several other places, although Constantius disliked and discountenanced the persecution.

When Constantine caused a Council of the Western Churches to be assembled at Arles in the year 314 A.D., there were present three British bishops, attended by a priest and deacon. The bishops were Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius of (probably) Caerleon. These were the principal cities of the districts into which the province of Britain was then subdivided, so that these bishops may have been the chiefs and representatives of a more numerous episcopate spread over the province. The fact is evidence that the Church was established in Britain as far north as York and as far west as Caerleon; that it had a Diocesan Episcopate, and the three orders of the clergy; that it was in full communion with the other churches of the Empire; and of sufficient importance to be summoned to a General Council.

Of the history of the Church in the province of *Britannia* we have only a few isolated incidents. The first of these is the martyrdom of Alban in the first year of the Diocletian persecution (303 A.D.). *Alban* was a citizen of Verulam and a heathen; but his kindness of disposition led him to give shelter to a priest whose life was sought; and from hearing the conversation and seeing the devotion of his guest *Alban* became a Christian. When the persecutors at length discovered the priest's place of refuge and came to seize him, *Alban*

put on the priest's dress, and allowed himself to be taken in his stead. When brought before the magistrate and commanded to sacrifice to the gods, Alban refused, declared himself a Christian, and was ordered to execution. The place of execution was a little hill outside the city, divided from it by a river. The inhabitants flocked out in such numbers to witness the martyrdom that the bridge over the river was blocked by the crowd; whereupon Alban, impatient for the crown of martyrdom, walked to the river bank, and—so says the ancient legend—the waters opened like those of Jordan before Elijah and Elisha, and made a dry road for the party to pass over. The executioner, seeing this, threw down his sword, and declared himself a convert to the Christian faith. Arrived at the summit of the hill, one of the soldiers struck off the victim's head, and the converted executioner shared his fate. When the Church made peace under Constantine, the faithful of Verulam hastened to do honour to their martyr by erecting a church on the site of the martyrdom. The local features of the story are little changed. The ruined Roman walls of Verulam may still be traced on the side of a hill, which slopes down to a little rivulet. On the summit of the opposite slope is the Abbey Church of St. Alban; it is partly built of Roman bricks from the neighbouring ruin, it incorporates moulded balusters of Saxon date; it is of all subsequent dates and styles of architecture from Norman to Victorian; and is the most ancient monument of our native Christianity.

It has already been noted that British bishops took part in the Council of Arles (314 A.D.). At the great Council of Nicæa (325 A.D.) there were few representatives of the churches of the West, and no record of any of the British province; but the decisions of

the Council were accepted here. There were British bishops at the **Council of Sardica** (347 A.D.). British bishops were present at the Council of **Rimini** (359 A.D.), and there is this special information about them: the Emperor had ordered that all the expenses of the bishops attending the Council should be paid out of the imperial funds; but Sulpicius Severus says "three only of those from Britain, on account of poverty, made use of the public gift, rejecting the contributions offered by the other bishops (because they thought it more proper to burden the treasury than individuals)." This seems to indicate that some of the British bishops were exceptionally poor, and therefore the bishops of poor churches.

In the early part of the fifth century, **the Romans abandoned Britain**. It had long been a source of trouble and weakness to the Imperial Government. Frequently it had set up rival Emperors who had harassed the Continent of Europe with civil war; as frequently the Government had been obliged to send troops into the province to repel the incursions of the Northern barbarians and the invasions of the Saxon pirates. In the reign of Honorius, the Imperial Government, harassed by the Barbarian invasions of Italy, left the Gallic provinces very much to their own devices, and at length resolved to lessen its responsibilities by the abandonment of the outlying British province. Accordingly, in 410 A.D., Honorius addressed a letter to the Cities of Britain exhorting them to provide for their own safety; and the Imperial officials and troops were withdrawn.

The history of the period is very obscure, but it may be gathered that the inhabitants of the deserted province organised a government for themselves on the existing lines, and that for half a century or thereabout this independent government was able to maintain the old



Roman order, and to repel the incursions of its foreign foes; but that after a while rivalries among the great officials weakened the government, which ultimately broke down under the Barbarian invasions.

In the meantime, between the withdrawal of the imperial rule and the break-up of the native government, occurs a chapter of ecclesiastical history, the best authenticated and most clearly detailed of the whole period. The narrative shows that while the country was harassed by incursions of the Northern Picts and the Saxons from beyond sea, of the old predatory kind, the peace and order of the country were not so much disturbed as to prevent religious questions from occupying a prominent place in the public mind. The heresy of Pelagius was troubling Western Christendom at that time. Pelagius is the Grecised form of Morgan (seaborn), and it is probable that its bearer was a native either of Britain or Armorica. But the heresy does not appear to have originated here, for Bede says that it was brought over into Britain by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian bishop. The heresy was a reaction against exaggerated notions of the utter inability of man in his present condition to choose and do the right. The reaction, as is usual, went too far in the opposite direction, and seemed to deny the doctrine that "man was very far gone from original righteousness," and needed the "grace of God preventing him that he might have a good will" before he could turn to what was right. St. Augustine was the great opponent of the heresy, and his writings on the subject of grace and free will, which arose out of the controversy, are the principal source of his reputation and influence as a theologian in the Western Church. The opinions of Pelagius were favourably received in Britain, and the native bishops, unable to

deal with them in controversy, sought aid from the Church of Gaul. A synod of Gallican prelates sent two of their greatest men, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, who preached "not only in the churches, but in the streets and fields, so that the Catholics were everywhere confirmed and those who had gone astray corrected." At length a public disputation was held, to which the partisans of Pelagius came, "conspicuous for riches, glittering in apparel;" but they were defeated in argument, and confessed their errors amid the acclamations of the people. **The Conference was probably held at St. Alban's (429 A.D.).** After it was over, Germanus visited the church built over the scene of Alban's martyrdom; deposited in the church some relics of other saints, and took away some of the dust from the martyr's tomb. The heretical opinions having soon revived, Germanus again, fifteen years afterwards, visited the island with Severus, afterwards Bishop of Treves (Lupus being dead), and the preaching of the two again corrected the errors, "so that the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted."<sup>1</sup>

This intercourse of the British Church with that of Gaul in the middle of the fifth century is enough to assure us of its general agreement with the Western Church, but it had some **peculiarities** of more or less interest and importance. There are indications that, like Gaul and Spain, it had a **Liturgy** of the Ephesine family, but differing in some small particulars from the Gallic and Mosarabic; that it had a Latin version of the **Bible** founded on the Old Latin, and different from the Vulgate, peculiar to itself. It had some little variations from the Continental usage in rites and ceremonies; one in the

<sup>1</sup> The quotations are from Bede, Eccl. Hist. xvii. and xxi.

consecration of bishops perhaps consisted in the anointing of the hands ; a peculiarity in baptism, which was probably single instead of trine immersion ; a custom of dedicating churches not in the name of some departed saint, but in that of the living founder. Two other peculiarities really of less importance, but which became points of controversy afterwards, were the shape of the clerical tonsure and the term of keeping **Easter**. The origin of the tonsure was probably the desire to distinguish the clergy from the laity, and perhaps to give them an appearance of the venerableness of age. In the usual Western tonsure, the top of the head was shaven, leaving a sort of crown of hair round it. But the British clergy had a tonsure of their own ; whence they got it, and even in what it consisted, is not certainly known. The Bishop of Edinburgh has recently suggested that the head was shaven away in front of a line drawn across the head from ear to ear, but leaving a partial crown or fringe of hair in front, so that in the front view it looked like the usual tonsure, and in the back view no tonsure at all was visible. Their mode of computing Easter was only an adherence to a cycle called by the name of Sulpicius Severus, a disciple of St. Martin of Tours, which had been used by all the Western churches, and which the British churches continued to use after the churches of the Continent had adopted the more correct cycle of Victorius Aquitanus ; just as the East now clings to the "old style," while the Western nations have adopted a reformed calendar.

## CHAPTER III

### *THE TEUTONIC INVASION*

THE Barbarian tribes beyond the Danube and the Rhine—Goths, Burgundians, Franks—were falling upon the decaying Empire like wolves upon a dying aurochs.<sup>1</sup>

The Saxons, Jutes, and Angles, inhabitants of the coast about the mouth of the Elbe, were unable to get at the prey for the Franks, who occupied the whole frontier of the Rhine from Strasburg to the sea, so they crossed the sea in their long ships, and fell upon the abandoned province of Britain, and there found their share of the spoil of the old world, and helped to build up the new world of modern Europe.

The **English conquest** was not the result of one great battle, as when Clovis in the battle of Soissons broke the power of the Prefect Syagrius and found no one left even to attempt to rally the scattered forces of Gaul against him; neither was it the achievement of one power gradually extending its conquest over the country, as in the Roman conquest of the island: it was the work of separate bands of adventurers acting independently of one another, at different places and times. They landed on different parts of the eastern and southern coasts or rowed up the rivers into the interior of the country. The circumstance of the

<sup>1</sup> The European bison, now almost extinct.

Barbarian conquest of Britain differed greatly from those of the contemporary conquests of Italy, Spain, and Gaul. On the Continent of Europe the Barbarian conquerors were content with the submission of the native people and settled down peacefully among them ; they allowed the towns to capitulate and to continue their old life, their religion, language, and laws, under their old municipal institutions, like so many Latin republics, amidst the Teutonic sea which surrounded them. But Goths, Burgundians, and Franks had long been in contact with Roman civilisation and had learnt to respect it, and the two former were Christians before they began their wars of conquest ; the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, who had been shut out from direct intercourse with the Empire by intervening tribes, were in a less advanced state of progress, and were too ignorant and barbarous to understand the value to themselves of the civilisation which they destroyed. With two or three probable exceptions, the towns of the conquered part of the British province seem to have been stormed, sacked, depopulated, and left in ruins. How far the native inhabitants of the country districts were also massacred or driven before the invaders is a difficult question still under discussion. Mr. E. A. Freeman held that the Teutonic conquerors, at least in the earlier period of their conquests, permitted few of the conquered race to remain on the lands on which they settled, and then only in the condition of hewers of wood and drawers of water.<sup>1</sup>

Circumstances determined the territorial organisation

<sup>1</sup> As an indication that a larger part of the British population than is usually supposed remained in their native seats, the Rev. E. M'Clure (see S.P.C.K.) points out that not only the names of great natural feature, as rivers and hills, retain their Celtic names, but that in many of the place names to which the terminations *ham* and *ton*

of the newcomers. In some cases a powerful chief took possession of a great tract of country, and allotted portions of it among the tribe of followers who had assisted in its conquest. In others a band of equal adventurers divided the district which they had seized in shares among themselves. The several bands of invaders pushed forward their conquests until they met. Then the conquerors began to organise themselves into kingdoms. The chief under whose banner his tribe had won a portion of the country was led to assume the authority and title of king. When two or three rival chiefs had occupied neighbouring territory, war sometimes determined the supremacy of one of them. In other cases the colonies of free adventurers put themselves under the protection of the most considerable chief of the neighbourhood for the sake of protection.

At the end of this first period of conquest the invaders had won the eastern half of the former Roman province, and had organised themselves into seven (or eight) independent kingdoms. It will be convenient to give the results of the English conquest in one view. The **Jutes** (c. 449) had established themselves in Kent, and subsequently possessed themselves of the Isle of Wight and the nearest portion of the mainland. The setting up of the kingdom of the **Southern Saxons** is ascribed to the year 477 A.D. In 495 the kingdom of **Wessex** was founded in what we now call Hampshire, and rapidly

give an English appearance, the former part of the compound word is Celtic; that is, the places retained their Celtic names; and the inference is that some of their Celtic inhabitants continued to live in them. For example, Lymington on the Lym; Leamington on the Leam; Tavingstock (Tavistock) on the Taf; Ermington on the Earne; Mycel-defer (Micheldever); Compton and Ashcombe (from *comb=cwm*); Penard, Pencrik, Cadbury; Havant and Funtamel (from *fons*).

enlarged itself. Some time in the sixth century the kingdom of **Essex** was founded between the Thames and the Stour, and the kingdom of the **East Angles** between the Stour and the Wash. An Anglian kingdom (**Northumbria**) was early founded on the coast between the Humber and the Forth, and slowly extended inland. Other Angles seized on the coast between the Humber and the Wash (the Lindiswara). Some late comers of various tribes made their way up the Trent into the heart of the midland counties, and these at length were united into the kingdom of **Mercia**, which took in the Anglian settlements on the coast, the West Saxon conquests north of the Thames, and most of the regions covered by the midland counties of modern England.

The second meridian west from Greenwich, which passes from the mouth of the Tweed to that of the Hampshire Avon, roughly defines the limit of the original Anglo-Saxon conquests. The native inhabitants of the western part of the old province had organised themselves into three kingdoms, Cumbria or Strathclyde, Wales, and West Wales or Damnonia. In 597 the kingdom of Strathclyde or Cumbria extended from the Solway Firth to the Mersey, and eastward beyond Leeds and nearly as far as York (Elmete and Loidis); Wales had the Severn for its eastern boundary; West Wales included Somerset, and sent up a tongue to Bradford and Malmesbury.

Besides, in the fastnesses of the conquered country, in the forests, amid the marshes, among the hills, remnants of the native population found a refuge, where they maintained themselves until they were peaceably absorbed into the general population.

It will be convenient to continue here the history down to the permanent territorial settlement of the two

ances. The conversion of the Teutonic kingdoms to Christianity did not arrest the progress of the forcible extension of their territory at the expense of the Celts, but the war assumed a milder form ; in the later acquisitions the lives, and to some extent the property, of the native people were respected.

In 577, Ceawlin, king of Wessex, by the great battle of Deorham, in which three Welsh princes were slain, gained possession of the cities of Bath, Gloucester, and Cirencester, and the country round about them, and thus cut off **West Wales (Damnonia)** from the rest of independent Britain. In 613, Æthelfrith, king of Northumbria, by the battle of Chester won the tract of country between the Dee and the Mersey, and **intervened between Wales and Strathclyde**. These three divisions of independent Britain were subject to further encroachment. Offa, king of the Mercians (755-794), encroached upon **Wales** to a line drawn from the mouth of the Wye to the estuary of the Dee, along which line he constructed an earthwork called Offa's Dyke. Harassed by the Northumbrian Angles and the Picts, the **Cumbrians** ceased to have kings of their own race in the early part of the tenth century. In the **south-western peninsula**, the South Saxon rule was continually being pressed farther and farther west, till the conquests of Athelstan (925-920) finally extinguished its independence.



## CHAPTER IV

### *THE ENGLISH CONVERSION*

THE conversion of these new inhabitants of the eastern half of the land is the next subject for consideration, and there are reasons which will appear in a later part of the history for treating it with careful accuracy and in some detail. In the latter part of the sixth century, the kingdom of Kent, the first settled of the new Teutonic kingdoms, and in most direct intercourse with the Continent, seems to have been the most powerful of the English kingdoms and the furthest advanced in civilisation. The king had obtained a recognised authority (indicated by the title *Bretwalda*) over the other kingdoms south of the Humber. This king, Ethelbert, sought a wife from the family of Clovis, the French conqueror of Gaul, and was allowed to carry away Bertha, a daughter of Charibert, king of Paris (one of the four grandsons among whom the heritage of Clovis was now divided), on condition that she should be allowed to retain her religion and the means of exercising it. Accordingly, she was attended to Kent by Bishop Liudhard; and Ethelbert repaired and restored for her use one of the deserted churches of the Britons, which still remained standing at Canterbury. The present church of St. Martin is probably on the same site, and partly built out of the material of the old Romano-British

church, since it includes bricks of undoubted Roman make. It is obvious that this event would probably before long have led to the conversion of Kent by the Gallican Church; but in the meantime the work was undertaken from another quarter, viz., from Rome.

### THE ROMAN MISSION.

Rome in the fifth century was at the lowest ebb of its fortunes. On the death of Gallienus (268 A.D.), the able Illyrian emperors who rescued the Empire from its dangers had made the camp their residence, and several of them never even visited the ancient capital. Diocletian (284-305 A.D.) had permanently fixed his court at Nicomedia, as the most convenient centre of affairs, and when he divided the Empire, had made Milan the capital of the West. Honorius had removed the court to Ravenna (404 A.D.). Though no longer the residence of the court and the seat of Empire, Rome continued to be a great and wealthy city. But the Goths had sacked it under Alaric in 410 A.D., and the Vandals under Genseric in 455 A.D., and had destroyed or driven into exile the great families, and left the city half ruined and half depopulated. The Western Empire had ended with the abdication of Augustulus (475 A.D.). Theodoric the Goth made himself master of Italy (489 A.D.). Justinian's great generals Belisarius (536 A.D.) and Narses reconquered it and made it an appanage of the Eastern Empire. Then came the invasion of the Lombards (568-570). At the time at which the history has arrived, Rome and a small territory around it was an outlying dependency of the Eastern Empire, almost isolated amidst the Lombard conquests, governed by a Prefect, whose

superior was the Exarch of Ravenna, who was the representative of the Emperor of the East. The Emperor was able to do little or nothing to aid the city, and it had to depend chiefly on its own forces and its own diplomacy for its safety from the Lombards. In these circumstances it exercised a large amount of self-government, and bore uneasily the interference of its distant master.

The Church of Rome had shared the decaying fortunes of the city. Barbarian kings and Byzantine generals had made and unmade its bishops; Theodoric had sent one Pope to Constantinople as his ambassador, Justinian had summoned another to Constantinople to give an account of himself, and both sovereigns had treated the Bishop of Rome with scanty consideration. The ecclesiastical reputation of the See for orthodoxy had been sullied by the vacillations of Vigilius, and its honorary primacy of the Church was challenged by the Patriarch of Constantinople, who argued that since the primacy of the Bishop of Rome had been derived from the fact that Rome was the capital of the Empire, that primacy now belonged to the Bishop of Constantinople by the same title. Gregory was now its bishop.

Gregory was said to be descended from one of the greatest of the old families—the Anician; his birth, his wealth, his ability had made him one of the most considerable persons in Rome. He had held the office of Prætor of the city. Then at the age of thirty-seven he had adopted the ascetic life, had turned the great house of his family on the Cælian hill into a monastery dedicated to St. Andrew, and had devoted his wealth to the founding of six other monasteries in Sicily. His high character and great ability made him as conspicuous in the Church as he had been in the State. The bishop

sent him to Constantinople as his official representative at the Emperor's court, where he remained for ten years. On his return to Rome, the bishop made him his secretary and archdeacon; and on the death of the bishop, six years afterwards, Gregory was elected by the Senate, clergy, and people to fill the vacant chair (590 A.D.).

Gregory's interest in the barbarous people who had wrecked the abandoned province of Britannia was due to what men call an accident. One day (about 586 or 587 A.D.), while still archdeacon, as he was crossing the Forum, a group of young people exposed for sale as slaves attracted his attention by their large stature, fair complexions, yellow hair, and blue eyes, which formed a striking contrast with the smaller stature and dark complexions of the Italians around them. The archdeacon stopped to make inquiry about them. He asked of what race they were? "Angli." "*Non Angli sed Angeli*," he replied. "And from what country did they come?" "Deira." "Such a race ought to be rescued *de ira Dei*. And their king's name?" "Ælla." "*Alleluia*," he exclaimed, "the praise of God must be sung in those parts." The incident made a great impression on Gregory's mind, and he resolved to go as a missionary to convert these Angles. But when he had actually set out on his journey, a popular outcry arose against the loss to Rome of so important a man, and the bishop was induced to recall him.

Six years after Gregory's accession (596 A.D.) he took up again his old idea of a mission to the Angles. He laid his plans on a great scale. For his agents he looked to his own monastery of St. Andrew, and committed the task to its Prior Augustine and a large body of its monks; including the clerks, and those who accompanied them,

the mission party numbered nearly forty men. They started from Rome probably in the early part of the year 596. Somewhere in the south of Gaul, frightened by what they heard of the hardships, difficulties, and dangers which awaited them, they halted, and induced Augustine to return to Rome and beg Gregory to abandon the undertaking. Gregory would not hear of it. He sent Augustine back with a letter of encouragement to the missionaries, and with other letters addressed to the Frank kings, commending his monks to the royal protection, and other letters to the principal bishops along their route, bespeaking their good offices.

The mission party, when Augustine rejoined them, proceeded northwards through Gaul; but the information which they received in Gaul about the condition of the country to which they were sent, and especially that Christianity had already obtained a footing in the island, led them to modify their plans, and, instead of making Deira (Yorkshire) their goal, to take advantage of the providential opening which offered itself in Kent. Perhaps Augustine's return had been partly in order to obtain Gregory's permission to make this alteration in his plans.

In the autumn of 596 A.D., Augustine landed at Ebbesfleet, in the Isle of Thanet, the usual port of entry, and sent a message to Ethelbert announcing his arrival from Rome with a message of high and joyful import. The king bade them stay where they were, ordering that their wants should be provided for. After a few days he went to the island, and sitting in the open air surrounded by his attendants, gave audience to the Italian strangers. They approached in procession with a silver cross borne before them, and a picture of our Lord painted on a panel by way of banner, and singing a litany. Augustine

at the king's desire sat down beside him, and preached to him the word of life. The king received them favourably, assigned them a residence in Canterbury, provided for their sustenance, and gave them liberty to preach and to win as many as they could to their religion. They resumed their journey, and ended it by entering the city in procession with cross and banner, singing their litany. Shortly afterwards the king gave them another ruined British church in the city, and a settled residence, with such possessions of different kinds as were necessary to their subsistence. Many of the people were converted and baptized, and before long Ethelbert himself embraced the faith; and his conversion was followed by that of still greater numbers of the people. Having thus obtained a secure footing, Augustine returned to Arles, where, by the desire of Gregory, the Bishop of Arles, the Metropolitan of Southern Gaul, consecrated Augustine as Bishop of the English. A few years afterwards (601) Gregory sent to Augustine a reinforcement of able men—Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus—with the honour of the pall for Augustine, and a supply of sacred vessels for the altars, ornaments for the churches, vestments for the priests and clerks, relics of apostles and martyrs, and many books. Gregory directed that the church of the English should be divided into twelve bishoprics with two centres, at London and York, and gave Augustine jurisdiction over them all, and over the British bishops also. These plans of the good bishop, made in ignorance of the local conditions, were not carried out. Gregory also gave directions not to destroy the idol temples of the English, but if they were well built to turn them into churches; but it is very doubtful whether any such idol temples existed. Augustine established his See in Canterbury in

a church "which he was informed had been built by the ancient Roman Christians, and which he consecrated as Christ Church, and there established a residence for himself and his successors. He also founded a monastery outside the city, where the king built a church dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul, but afterwards called St. Augustine's. The monks were placed in this monastery, but Augustine lived with his priests and clerks in the city."

It was probably in 602 or 603 A.D. that Augustine took steps to come to an **understanding with the ancient British Church**. With the assistance of King Ethelbert he arranged a meeting at a place which Bede says was known in his time as Augustine's Ac, *i.e.*, Augustine's Oak, and which he describes as being on the borders of the Wicii and West Saxons. The locality is disputed, but our best authorities place it at Aust, where in Roman times was the ordinary ferry across the Severn. At a first interview, when the Britons persistently declined to alter the customs of their church at "the entreaties, exhortations, and rebukes of Augustine and his companions," an attempt was made to overawe them by a miracle. A blind man of the English race was brought "who found no benefit or cure from the ministry of the Britons," but on the prayer of Augustine received sight. Still the British deputies declared their inability to yield without the consent of their people, and arranged for a second interview at which more of their number would be present.

At the second interview, seven British bishops were present, and many very learned men, particularly from their most noble monastery of Bangor Iscoed (under the wood), which was twelve miles from Chester, on the east of the Dee. The question turned on their being willing

or not to accept Augustine as their archbishop; and that by the advice of a holy hermit was made to depend on the way in which he should treat them at this interview. He received them sitting in his chair, and did not rise at their approach; whereupon they declined to accept him as their archbishop or to make the changes which he desired; for, they said among themselves, "if he would not rise up to us now, how much more will he contemn us as of no worth if we shall put ourselves in subjection to him." It is to be noted that **the two churches were not divided by any question of principle**; all that Augustine asked was that the Britons would keep Easter by the Roman computation, use the same form of baptism which Rome used (probably by trine immersion), and help to convert the English. Augustine had no objection to make to their orders or the like; and did not demand their obedience in the name of the divine right of Rome, but as a matter of expediency invited it; he did not excommunicate them for their refusal. The Britons for their part had made up their minds to yield on all the minor questions, and only refused to accept Augustine's supremacy from fear that it would be abused.

7 In 604 A.D. Ethelbert aided Augustine with his influence as Bretwalda to spread the Church into the neighbouring kingdoms. A church was built at **Rochester**, and Justus was consecrated its bishop. Probably Rochester was the chief city of a semi-independent sub-tribe planted in the north-west corner of the Kentish kingdom. Its bishop was always in a special sense a suffragan of the bishops of Canterbury, for he was nominated by them, and acted as their cross-bearer. At the same time a church was built in London, the principal city of the **East Saxons**. Sebert, their king,



a nephew of Ethelbert, received baptism, and Mellitus was consecrated as their bishop. Apparently at the same time Redwald, king of the **East Angles**, was baptized at Canterbury, and returned with some missionary priest in his train, but the new religion was opposed by his queen, and was not well received by his people. Redwald himself was only half-hearted, for "in the same temple he had an altar to sacrifice to Christ, and another small one to offer victims to devils." Augustine died 605, and was succeeded by Laurentius.

Ethelbert died in 616 A.D., and Sebert shortly afterwards. It is an evidence of the personal greatness of Ethelbert that his death was followed by a crisis both in Church and State. The authority of Bretwalda passed to the king of East Anglia. His son and successor, Eadbald, married his widowed stepmother, and perhaps this was the cause of his rejection of Christianity and his quarrel with Laurentius. The men of Rochester drove their bishop out of the city; the sons of Sebert, it now appears, had never been baptized, and freed from their father's authority and that of Ethelbert, they openly reverted to paganism. Mellitus fled to Canterbury, and thence he and Justus fled to Gaul, and Laurentius was about to follow, when Eadbald repented, and the fugitive bishops were recalled. Justus resumed his place at Rochester, but the Londoners would not receive Mellitus again. Perhaps the loss of the authority of Bretwalda by the kings of Kent had something to do with the fact that the successors of Augustine—Laurentius, Justus, Honorius, Deusdedit—do not seem to have taken any action beyond their own diocese. They accepted the position of bishops of Kent, and the claim to be archbishops of the English fell into obscurity.

The work of evangelisation in Kent was done chiefly on monastic lines. The great monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, founded by Augustine outside the walls of Canterbury, was followed in 616 by the foundation of the monastery of Dover, in 630 by the double monastery at Folkestone, which King Eadbald founded for his daughter Æanswitha, who became its first abbess; in 633 of the double house of Lyminge,<sup>1</sup> founded for Ethelburga, the widowed queen of Edwin of Northumbria; towards the close of the century of Minster in Sheppy, the foundation of Sexburga, the wife of King Earcombert, and a little later of Minster in Thanet, founded by Earmenburga, the grand-niece of Ethelburga. The monastery at Reculver in 669 completed the foundations of the descendants of Ethelbert. The monasteries founded churches upon their estates, and did much towards clearing the forest which covered the western portion of the kingdom, and reclaiming the marshes on the southern coast.

At the end of twenty-eight years from the arrival of Augustine, the Church was still limited to Kent. Then an accident, so to call it, quite apart from any action of the bishop, led to its further extension. Again it was a royal marriage which opened the way for the introduction of the Gospel into Northumbria.

<sup>1</sup> The foundations of the church have been excavated in the present generation. It had a western as well as an eastern apse, like the ancient Christ Church of Canterbury.

## CHAPTER V

### *THE ITALIAN MISSION IN NORTHUMBRIA*

THE interest of the story passes now from Kent to Northumbria. Edwin, the able and enterprising king of the northern kingdom, and the Bretwalda, sought Ethelburga of Kent, the daughter of Ethelbert and Bertha, in marriage. It was arranged, as in the case of her mother, that the princess and all who accompanied her should have leave to follow their faith and worship; Paulinus was consecrated bishop, July 625, to go with her to her northern home. Edwin was induced to listen to Paulinus' preaching, and at length to lay before a Gemote of his thanes and counsellors the question of abandoning their old heathenism and embracing Christianity. Bede's narrative of the proceedings of the council gives an interesting suggestion of the various motives which influenced men's minds then in weighing the claims of the new religion. When the king asked their opinion of the new religion, Coifi, the pagan high priest, spoke first. He declared that the religion which they had hitherto held had no virtue in it, for no one more diligently worshipped the gods than he, and yet there were others who were much more prosperous: whereas, if the gods were good for anything, they would have shown special favour to him. After the worldly high priest, one of the king's thanes spoke. "The present

life of man, O king, seems to me in comparison with that which is unknown to us, like the swift flight of a sparrow through the hall where you sit in winter at supper with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire within, while storms of rain and snow prevail without; the sparrow flies in at one door and immediately out at another; whilst he is within he is safe from the wintry storm, but after a short space in the light and warmth of the hall, he vanishes out of sight into the dark and storm from which he came. So this life of man appears here for a short space, but of what went before or what is to follow we are utterly ignorant. If this new doctrine can tell us something more certain it deserves to be followed."

The result of the consultation was the acceptance of Christianity as the religion of Northumbria. The baptism of the king took place at York, and seems to have been made a great public function, as it deserved to be. While the catechumens were being instructed, an oratory of timber was erected over a spring for the baptistery; and no doubt a number of the thanes and others were baptized at the same time as the king. A church of stone was immediately afterwards begun, enclosing this oratory, and remained unfinished for many years until Oswy completed it. The present Cathedral of York represents this early church, and the high altar stood over the spring in which Edwin was baptized until the present century.

The work of Paulinus in Northumbria was conducted under peculiar conditions which need a little consideration. Passing straight from reading of the work of the Church in Kent, where there was a numerous band of missionaries, we are in danger of overlooking the fact that throughout the reign of Edwin, so far as we see,

Paulinus was the only priest in Northumbria. To do honour to his royal patroness and to give him prestige at the court of Edwin, he had been consecrated bishop; but he was practically Queen Bertha's chaplain. James the Deacon appears upon the scene of Bede's history subsequently without any account of his antecedents; but it seems highly probable that he accompanied Paulinus from Kent. It was not perhaps so indispensable as it is in the East, but it was highly expedient in the circumstances, that Paulinus should have a deacon to assist him in the celebration of the Eucharist, and to give him general help in his office about the queen and the Christian female attendants, who, it is reasonable to suppose, accompanied her to the North. The chief duty of Paulinus, then, was to be always with the queen and to maintain divine service unintermittingly on her account. He was by no means at liberty to wander through the country at will as a missionary; such wandering would have been a neglect of the special duty which had been committed to him. His missionary work had therefore to be done at the court of the king. But since the king and his court passed from one royal ville to another, staying for a time at each; and wherever the king resided there would be a great resort of the neighbouring thanes and people, Paulinus could hardly have devised a better plan of missionary work, at least in its earlier time, than to take advantage of the opportunities which these royal progresses and residences offered him. Thus he could preach to the thanes and people of successive neighbourhoods under the present countenance of the Christian king and queen. Bede gives an account of his doings at **Adgefrin** (Yeaverin, parish of Kirk Newton, in Glendale), no doubt as a sample of the

evangelising work done on these occasions. "So great," he says, "was the fervour of the faith and the desire of the washing of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time, coming with the king and queen to the royal seat which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechising and baptizing; during which days from morning to night he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving word, and when instructed he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen which is close by." Bede adds that "in Deira also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract (near Richmond), for as yet oratories or fonts could not be made in the early infancy of the church in those parts." At another of the royal villes at **Campodunum** (Doncaster?), Paulinus built another church, which was burned by the pagan Cædwalla when he overran Northumbria in 633 A.D. The church was probably of wood, since only the stone altar escaped destruction.<sup>1</sup>

The way in which the work of Paulinus depended upon the movements of the king and queen is shown in another interesting passage of the history. The province of Lindsey (in Lincolnshire), long in dispute between Northumbria and Mercia, was at that time under the power of Edwin, and it is most likely that it was in accompanying the king and the court on a long visit to this province that Paulinus found the opportunity to do some good missionary work, the results of which have lasted to the present day. He preached at **Lincoln**,

<sup>1</sup> Eccl. Hist., ii. 14.

where he converted Blecca, the governor (Prefect) of the city, with all his family, and built "a stone church of beautiful workmanship," probably the predecessor of the present St. Paul's (? Paulinus') church, which stands in the middle of the ancient Colonia Lindum. Paulinus also preached and baptized in the presence of the king a great number of people at Zeovulfingaceaster (Southwell, in Notts). The fact that the bishops of York had a residence at Southwell, and held it as a peculiar of their See, with certain rights over all the parish churches of Nottinghamshire, throughout the Middle Ages, seems to indicate some royal grant to the See of York on this occasion. It was one of the men baptized here whose interesting description of St. Paulinus has been preserved by Bede: "He was wont to describe him as tall of stature, a little stooping, his hair black, his visage meagre, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and majestic."<sup>1</sup> It is a masterly pen and ink sketch, and brings the man vividly before us.

Edwin had ruled over Northumbria for seventeen prosperous years, six years of which he had been a Christian, when there came a terrible reverse. The princes of the Britons united their forces under Cædwalla, in whom they recognised some sort of overlordship, and Cædwalla entered into an alliance with Penda, the powerful king of the Mercians, and their united forces invaded Northumbria, and defeated and slew Edwin in a great battle at Heathfield (Hatfield, near Doncaster) in 633. Cædwalla ravaged Northumbria with great cruelty, "resolving to cut off the race of the English within the borders of Britain; nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had newly taken root

<sup>1</sup> Bede, Eccl. Hist., ii. 16.

among them.”<sup>1</sup> From Bede’s point of view Cædwalla was an oppressor of the English ; but from the opposite point of view he was the last great hero of the British race, the victor in forty battles, the conqueror of five kings ; and his conquest of Northumberland is to be noted as the last great attempt of the Britons to drive back the Teutonic invasion. Paulinus fled with Ethelburga and her children, and returned by sea to Kent after eight years’ absence ; he took back with him a gold cross and gold chalice, which were long after preserved in the church at Canterbury. Paulinus was afterwards Bishop of Rochester, and the widowed queen became the first abbess of the double monastery of Lyminge, as has been already said.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, ii. 20.



## CHAPTER VI

### *THE CELTIC MISSION*

So far the Italian mission was the only one in the field. The British Church had declined to join with Augustine in the conversion of the barbarians. It was perhaps hardly to be expected. Augustine was an Italian, working among the men of Kent, who had been in peaceful possession of their country for a hundred years; but in the West the strife between the two races still raged; if the Britons had shown the superhuman charity to offer their evangelising ministrations to their ferocious enemy, it is not likely that the Saxons would have listened to the teaching of a race which they despised. We have now to turn to the history of a new mission, to which in the long run Teutonic England owed the greater part of its evangelisation, and which did indirectly bring the influence of the British Church to bear upon the English and Saxon peoples.

The **Welsh Church of the sixth century**, in spite of the troubles of the period, possessed several men famous for their learning and sanctity, and the Irish saints of the time are represented in their legendary lives as going to Britain, and especially to St. David, for their religious training. Finan, one of these Irish saints, after spending thirty years in Britain, chiefly in the monastery of St. David, and having also had the instructions of St.

Caradoc and Gildas (the historian), at length returned to Ireland "with several of the religious Britons," whom legendary story calls "the Twelve Apostles of Ireland," and there they founded the great monastery of Clonard in Meath. In the middle of the sixth century, Columba, a monk of Clonard, with twelve companions, settled in the little island of Hi (latinised into Iona), off the coast of Galloway, and founded a monastery there, which became a centre of missions to the neighbouring countries.

The kingdom of Northumbria was divided into two sub-kingdoms, Deira (= Yorkshire) and Bernicia (= Northumberland and Durham), ruled by two branches of the house of Ida, the conqueror. There was a constant rivalry between these two families, and sometimes one, sometimes the other obtained the upper hand, and for a time united the two sub-kingdoms in one hand. Edwin of Bernicia, whose conversion we have recorded, had made himself king of united Northumbria by a successful battle with Ethelfrid,<sup>1</sup> of the rival royal house of Deira. The two young sons of Ethelfrid, with a train of young nobles, had fled and sought safety among the Scots, and had embraced Christianity at the hands of the fathers of Iona.

In 635 A.D. the banished Oswald, son of Ethelfrid of the royal family of Deira, set himself to reconquer Northumbria from Cædwalla. Returning with the companions of his exile, he was joined by some of his fellow-countrymen, and on the approach of the British king, he awaited battle at the place subsequently called Hevenfelt, in the neighbourhood of Hexham, under the shadow of the Roman wall. Before the engagement began,

<sup>1</sup> The king who had extended Northumbria westward and won the battle of Chester in 613. See p. 20.

Oswald with his own hands set up a cross of wood, and with his little army knelt before it and prayed for victory. From Bede's statement that before this cross "there was no sign of the Christian faith, no church, no altar, erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians," it may be inferred that the missionary labours of Paulinus had not made much impression upon this northern portion of Northumbria. The result of the battle was that Cædwalla was defeated and slain, and Oswald recovered the throne of united Northumbria to himself and his descendants. This was one of the decisive battles of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, for it put an end to the last endeavour of the Britons to recover the land which they had lost.

Oswald was a man of earnest piety, "a most Christian king" Bede calls him, and as soon as he was established on the throne he took steps for the conversion of his people. "Jacob the Deacon" now appears on the scene. He had apparently remained behind when Paulinus returned to Kent in charge of the widowed Ethelburga and her children. Oswald did not invite Jacob to send to Canterbury for other missionaries to continue the interrupted work of Paulinus, but sent to Iona to invite the abbot to send him a bishop (*antistes*). The first who was sent soon returned and reported to the community that the Northumbrians were a stubborn and impracticable people with whom nothing could be done. One of the brethren present commented on the statement. "Brother," said Aidan, "it seems to me that you have been unduly hard upon these untaught hearers, and have not given them first, according to the Apostle's precept, the milk of less solid doctrine, until, gradually nurtured on the word of God, they should have strength enough to digest the more perfect lessons." He who

had given the wise counsel seemed to be the man best fitted to carry it out ; and **Aidan was forthwith "ordained" bishop and sent to Oswald.**<sup>1</sup>

Aidan was accompanied by several of the brethren of Iona, and other Celtic monks came to him from day to day. The Columban monks preferred an island near the mainland for the site of their principal houses ; the new mission was accordingly established in the small island of Lindisfarne on the Northumbrian coast, under the shadow of the king's rock-seated residence at Bamborough. The island was flat and unproductive, but it afforded the seclusion which the monks desired, while the ebb tide left a passage across the sands twice a day from the mainland, so that it was sufficiently accessible for the resort of people who had business with the island. Of the buildings which were erected on the Holy Isle there is no description, but they would probably be in imitation of those of Iona, where the church and larger apartments were of great timbers and planks, and the smaller rooms of wattle, after the Celtic fashion of building. The church built at Lindisfarne by Finan, the successor of Aidan, was "not of stone, but of hewn oak covered with reeds." The existing Saxon church at Greenstead in Essex shows that the "hewn oak" means trunks of trees split in two and placed side by side, with their flat sides inward. Eadbert, a later bishop, took off the thatch and covered both roof and walls with plates of lead.

Here the Scottish colony established itself as a monastery following the Columban rule ; but the monastery was not so much a place of religious retirement as a centre of missionary work ; its abbot was the Bishop

<sup>1</sup> There are forty-eight years between the beginning of Augustine's work and that of Aidan.

of the Northumbrians, its brethren were missionaries. Education formed an important feature of the work. Aidan at once took permanent charge of twelve English youths as disciples—among them were the future bishops Eata, Cedd, Chad, and Wilfrid—and thus a native clergy was speedily taught and trained. This sacred spot was the seat of sixteen bishops in succession before the Danes destroyed the house; and from it went forth the Englishmen who planted the Church in the north and midland and part of the east of England.

We are able, by bringing together the scattered notices in Bede's history of the time, to see how the Church was gradually planted in Northumbria. As Paulinus was usually in attendance on the court wherever it went, so Aidan was frequently with the king in his progresses through the country and his stay at the different royal villas, and Bede relates how the king would sometimes interpret the Celtic bishop's addresses to the Northumbrian hearers.

"He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback unless compelled by some urgent necessity." "All those who bore him company, whether they were monks or laymen, were employed in meditation, that is, either in reading the Scriptures or in learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wherever they went." "He never gave presents of money to the powerful when he happened to entertain them, and whatever gifts of money he received from the rich he either distributed to the poor, or bestowed them in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves, many of whom, after having taught and instructed them, he advanced to the order of the priesthood."

Aidan was a man who for his great work and saintly

character deserves a place in a reformed Calendar of the English Church.<sup>1</sup> "He was," says Bede, "a man of singular meekness, piety, and zeal." "It was the highest commendation of his doctrine that he taught no otherwise than he and his followers lived." "He was beloved and venerated by all, even by the bishops of the Italian school, Honorius of Canterbury and Felix of the East Angles."

In 642 A.D., after a short reign of eight years, Oswald was slain in battle at Maserfield (? Oswestry = Oswald's tree) with his old enemy Penda. His dying words, a prayer for his people, passed into a proverb, "O God have mercy on their souls, said Oswald as he fell." In those eight years he had laid the solid foundations of the Church in Northumbria, whence it spread rapidly into several other of the Heptarchic kingdoms. His brother and successor, Oswy, during his long reign of twenty-seven years, was hardly inferior to Oswald in his friendship for Aidan and his zeal for the maintenance and extension of the faith.

Before the battle near Leeds (655) in which he defeated and slew Penda of Mercia, he made a vow that in the event of his winning back the kingdom he would found twelve monasteries, six in Bernicia and six in Deira. What this means was that the king gave so many tracts of land, each cultivated by ten families, in each of these places, and two or three of Aidan's monks were settled upon each, who gathered lay brethren about them, and set up Divine worship and opened schools; and thus each became a new centre of Christian teaching and influence. Other thanes and landholders followed the king's example; and men sometimes dedicated their own

<sup>1</sup> His day would be August 31.

patrimony to the Church, and became the first abbots. It will be convenient to give here a summary of the rest of the English conversions, without entering into details.

**Conversion of the West Saxons.**—Oswald, on his establishment in his kingdom, sought a bride of the royal family of the West Saxons. At the court of Kynegils he found an Italian, Birinus, who had been consecrated bishop at Genoa with a view to his undertaking the conversion of some heathen country. Oswald no doubt added his influence to the preaching of Birinus, with the happy result that Kynegils accepted Christianity, Oswald taking the position of sponsor to his father-in-law. Birinus became the first bishop of the West Saxons (A.D. 635).

**The Conversion of Mercia.**—Peada, the son of Penda the fierce heathen king of Mercia, had been made by his father sub-king of the district of the Middle Angles. In the year 652 A.D. he sought a daughter of Oswy of Northumbria for his wife. Alchfrid, the son of Oswy, was already married to the sister of Peada. The objection to giving a Christian princess in marriage to a heathen was happily removed by Peada's conversion: "When he had heard the preaching of the truth, the promises of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, though he should be refused the maiden." "So he was baptized, together with the earls and soldiers and servants who had accompanied him." When he returned home, he took Chadd and three other Northumbrian priests with him, who established the Church among the Middle Angles.

**Conversion of the East Saxons.**—Sigebert, king of the East Saxons, coming on a visit to Oswy in the year (653 A.D.) after Penda's visit, was converted, with the

thanes who accompanied him. On his return he took with him two Northumbrian priests, Cedd, the brother of Chadd, and another, to convert his people. Cedd established two mission centres in Essex, one at Tilabery (East Tilbury), where a ford from Kent crossed the Thames, and the other at Ythanacester (Bradwell), on the site of the Roman fortress *Othona*, on the east coast; and from these centres Essex was evangelised.

**Conversion of the East Angles.**—There had been two previous failures to establish the faith among the inhabitants of this peninsula. Redwald had been baptized at the court of Ethelbert, but the Gospel did not spread among his family or people. His son Eorpwald was induced by Edwin of Northumbria to abandon his old religion with his whole province (627 A.D.) and receive the faith and sacraments of Christ, but shortly afterwards he was slain, and the province relapsed. Three years afterwards his brother Sigebert, who had been living in exile in Burgundy, was recalled to take possession of the kingdom. He had embraced the faith in his exile and was “a most Christian and learned man,” and was most desirous of introducing among his people the good institutions which he had seen in France. In this he was assisted by Bishop Felix, a Burgundian, who settled as bishop of the East Angles at Dunwich, and introduced masters and teachers after the French manner. Shortly afterwards a learned monk of noble Scottish blood named Furzey came from Ireland with five companions, and founded a monastery within the area of the old Roman station at Burgh Castle, near the northern coast, and from these two centres the country was evangelised.

**Conversion of the South Saxons.**—The kingdom of the South Saxons, though so near Kent, was the last of



the English kingdoms to be converted. In the middle of the century, Ethelwealh, the king, had married a Christian wife, Ebba, daughter of Eanfrid, sub-king of the Wiccii, and apparently had received baptism as a condition of the marriage (661 A.D.). A little company of five or six Irish monks lived in a little monastery near Bosham, but no one, Bede says, cared to imitate their life or listen to their preaching. At this time it happened that Wilfrid of York, when banished from Northumbria (as will be seen in the subsequent narrative), found his way to Sussex (681 A.D.), and was welcomed by Ethelwealh, who gave him a tract of land at Selsey. Wilfrid enfranchised and baptized 250 slaves whom he found on his estate, built a church, and made a good beginning of the South Saxon conversion.

**To sum up the history of the English conversion,** Kent owes its Christianity to the Roman mission of Gregory; Northumbria, Mercia, and Essex, to the Celtic mission at Lindisfarne; East Anglia to Burgundian Felix and Scottish Furzey; Wessex to Genevan Birinus and the French Agilbert; and the South Saxons to Northumbrian Wilfrid. The English conquests began 550 A.D.; the evangelisation of the conquerors in Kent began with Augustine in 597 (long before the strife between the two races had come to an end in the West), and the conversion of the South Saxons in 681 completed the banishment of paganism out of the south of the island. So that within the space of a century, by a course of peaceful missionary work, unchecked by any persecution on the part of the heathens, unaided by any enforced conversions on the part of the Christians, the faith had been established in all the Heptarchic kingdoms.

It is ungracious to seem to minimise the gratitude we

owe to Gregory the Great for his noble mission to our English forefathers, but when we find Rome putting forward a claim to the obedience of the Church of England on the ground that we owe our Christianity to her, and that our Church is an offshoot of the Roman Church, it becomes necessary to point out that the British Church, which came originally from the East, had existed for more than three and a half centuries before Augustine came, and continued to exist quite independent of him in the western half of the country; that in the eastern half of the country **only the church of Kent traces its origin to Augustine.** That Augustine laid the first stone of the Church of the English race entitles him to special honour; but we are not willing to forget that Aidan and his disciples also laid great foundation-stones, and that the others whose labours we have so briefly alluded to, completed the foundations upon which is being built the mighty structure of the Church of the English-speaking peoples.

The Christianising and civilising influence of the Church was brought to bear upon England at a **favourable time.** The rude Teutonic tribes had settled down on their new lands, and were multiplying and prospering, and needing the development of the institutions of civilisation. They had outgrown their old religion. A religion which taught that those who fell in combat were the favoured sons of Odin, and that in Valhalla the heroes enjoyed all day the fierce delight of battle and spent the night in feasting on swine's flesh and drinking ale with the gods, might satisfy their piratical forefathers, but was not calculated to meet the aspirations of homely Englishmen devoted to the cultivation of their glebe and the well-being of their flocks and herds. Most of their Teutonic kinsmen, Burgundians and

Goths, who had won for themselves kingdoms in Europe, were Christians before their conquests began; their nearest neighbours, the Franks, had embraced Christianity soon after they had settled themselves in Gaul. The old heathenism was a part of the old barbarism, and Christianity was the religion of the civilised world. It was no doubt this condition of things which influenced the course of the English conversions. The kings and their counsellors understood that progress in civilisation involved, in the circumstances, the adoption of Christianity; when the question was proposed to the folk-mote, the people were willing to follow their chiefs; and so nation after nation entered bodily into the fold of Christ.

Such **wholesale conversions** could not be other than **shallow**, and hence the early apostasies of which we have read in several of the kingdoms. But on the whole the people put themselves into the hands of their new teachers with little reluctance. And **the teaching fell on good ground**. The race must have been one of great natural qualities. It is surprising to find among the very first disciples of Aidan in rude Northumbria men of sufficient learning and character to be intrusted with the duty of laying the foundations of new churches like Chadd and Cedd, men of the intellectual eminence and culture of Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop. Kent also had native bishops in the second generation, for Ithamar of Rochester was a Kentish man, and Deusdedit of Canterbury was a Wessex man notwithstanding his Latin name. Indeed the new religion was embraced with great earnestness among all classes of the people.

The **monastic institution** was in great favour at this time; the monasteries were spiritual fortresses, schools of learning, centres of evangelisation; and the gradual

conversion of the country was carried on largely on these monastic lines. Kings and ealdormen and thanes gave lands, and the missionaries planted small communities upon them; landowners turned their own houses into monasteries and became themselves the first abbots and abbesses; sometimes they gave them to the Church, sometimes kept them as hereditary benefices. **The part which women of royal and noble families took** in the early history of the English Church is very remarkable, and without a parallel in Church history. It recalls to mind what Tacitus said centuries before of the character and influence of the women of their Teutonic ancestry. At first, before there were monasteries for women in England, they went to foreign houses, to Farmoustier, Chelles, Andelye, and Brie. But nunneries were very early founded, as we have seen, in Kent. In Northumbria Aidan encouraged Hieu to organise a small house at Hartlepool, which was afterwards removed to Whitby, and became famous under Abbess **Hilda**. The most remarkable thing was that many of these houses were **double houses** for monks and nuns living in adjoining buildings, worshipping in the same church, all under the rule of the abbess. Thus in addition to the Kentish houses already mentioned (p. 30), Whitby, Barking, Coldingham, Ely, Wenlock, Repandun, Wigorn, Wimborne, were all double houses.<sup>1</sup> About 100 religious houses are known to us as founded before the Norman Conquest.

<sup>1</sup> At Beverley, a monastery of monks, a college of canons, and a convent of nuns obeyed the same abbot.

## CHAPTER VII

### *THE HEPTARCHIC CHURCHES UNITED INTO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND*

IT has already been mentioned that there were some differences between the churches of the Celtic foundation and those founded by missionaries from the Continent. These differences were only on some unimportant matters of custom and ritual, and there was nothing like a schism between the two schools, but there was some jealous feeling, and when they came into contact a certain amount of friction. Matters came to a crisis in Northumbria, where the two schools existed side by side. The prevailing use of Northumbria was that of Lindisfarne, and this was followed by Oswy the king. But the queen, Eanfleda, was one of the children with whom the widowed Ethelburga, on the defeat and death of Edwin, had fled to her native Kent; she had been brought up in the Kentish customs, and had continued them in Northumbria under the influence of Romanus, the chaplain who had accompanied her from Kent; for it seems to have been the custom for a Christian queen to take a chaplain of her own country with her to her husband's court, as her adviser and the governor of her family. Besides the cases of Bertha and Ethelburga and this of Eanfleda, there is also that of Etheldrid, who,

when she left East Anglia to be the wife of King Wulfhere of Mercia, was accompanied by the monk Owini as "her prime minister and the governor of her family." (Bede, *Eccl. Hist.* iv. 3.) Besides the queen there were other adherents of the Continental customs. Jacob the Deacon had kept up an influence. Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, and perhaps a few others, had travelled on the Continent, and had recognised the superior learning of the Continental churches and embraced their customs. Alchfred, the king's son, was the friend of Wilfrid, and had given him a monastery at Ripon, into which Wilfrid had introduced the Continental customs. The court itself, therefore, was divided between the two parties; and though it might not really matter much whether Easter was kept by the computation of one school or of the other, it was practically inconvenient, and somewhat of a scandal, that while the king and his men and the people generally were keeping the great Easter festival, the queen and her women and an influential knot of adherents should be still amidst the austerities of Holy Week.

It happened that Agilbert, the Gallic bishop who had just resigned the West Saxon see, came (664 A.D., 22nd year of Oswy) on a long visit to the court of Northumbria with a priest, Agatho, in his train, and their comments on the difference of customs led to the calling of a **synod**, which was held at Hilda's monastery of **Whitby**, to consider the matter. Cedd, Bishop of the East Saxons, happened also to be present (664 A.D.). The account of the opening of the synod by Oswy, and of the discussion between Bishop Colman of Lindisfarne on the one side, and Wilfrid, the chief speaker on the other, is given at length by Bede (iii. 25). The result was that the king and the majority decided to accept the

Continental customs. Colman resigned his see, and, with those of his monks who agreed with him, retired from Northumbria.<sup>1</sup>

When Colman retired from Lindisfarne, Tuda was put in his place, and on his death within a few months, Wilfrid was chosen. He went abroad to seek consecration from his friend Agilbert of Paris; but he stayed away so long, that people got tired of waiting for his return, and Chadd was nominated and consecrated (in the vacancy of Canterbury) by Wini, Bishop of the West Saxons, assisted by "two bishops of the British nation who kept Easter in the canonical manner," probably bishops of the independent churches of West Wales (Devon and Cornwall). Wilfrid, on his return in 665 or 666 A.D., found his seat occupied, and retired to his monastery of Ripon. We anticipate the chronological order of the history to say that when Theodore visited the North in the year after his arrival (669), he deposed Chadd, partly on account of some unexplained irregularity in his consecration, but chiefly on the ground that he had usurped a see which was not vacant, and reinstated Wilfrid. Chadd submitted with characteristic humility, and retired to the monastery which he had founded on his property at Lestingham; but soon afterwards, on the death of Jaruman, he was made Bishop of Mercia, and fixed his see at Lichfield.

In the year after the Synod of Whitby, Deusdedit,

<sup>1</sup> The other Celtic churches voluntarily adopted the Continental customs one after another in the course of the eighth century: the Southern Picts of Galloway in 710; the Southern tribes of Ireland in the first half of the seventh century; the Northern tribes in 701; Iona in 715; the Britons in Wessex in 692; in North Wales soon after, 750; in South Wales in 777.

Archbishop of Canterbury, died (665 A.D.). Oswy of Northumbria and Egbert of Kent, having consulted together, took steps to put the English churches into harmony with one another and with the Continental churches. With this end in view they determined, with the consent of the churches, to send **Wighard**, one of Deusdedit's clergy, to Rome, to study the usages of the church at that great centre of the ecclesiastical learning of the West, to obtain consecration there, and on his return to be acknowledged as archbishop, and to regulate the affairs of the English church. Wighard unhappily died at Rome with several of his companions; whereupon the English agreed not to incur the delay and danger of another journey to Rome and back, but to ask the Bishop of Rome to select a suitable man and consecrate him. Vitalian, who was then Bishop of Rome, chose Hadrian, an African, abbot of a monastery near Naples, who excused himself, but recommended **Theodore**, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, a monk of learning, piety, and ability, who had come to Rome lately in the train of the Emperor. Theodore was not well known to Vitalian, who at first had doubts of his orthodoxy, and at last only consented to send him to England on condition that Hadrian would accompany him. Both Theodore and Hadrian were skilled in sacred and secular learning; disciples flocked to them from the southern kingdoms, and Bede testifies that in his time there were some of their scholars still living, as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in that in which they were born.

**The Organisation of the Church of England—Synod of Hertford (673 A.D.).**—In 673 Theodore assembled a synod of bishops and others at Hertford: there were present Theodore of Kent; Bisi, Bishop of the East Angles;



the proxies of Wilfrid of Northumbria, Putta of Rochester, Eleutherius of the West Saxons, and Winfrid of the Mercians. These all agreed to accept certain canons, which Bede gives at length (iv. 5), the effect of which was to unite the national churches into an ecclesiastical province. "This," says Bede, "was the first archbishop whom all the English churches obeyed." Thus the Church of England is older than the English monarchy, older than English law, older than English literature, older even than the English nation; for there was a united Church of England, embracing the whole population, Jute, Angle, and Saxon, a hundred years before the kingdoms were united under the sceptre of Egbert. The kingdoms continued more or less independent of one another, and wars between them were still frequent; but the church councils, which brought together not only the bishops and clergy of all the kingdoms, but also the kings, and their thanes and ministers, as members of one church, consulting and acting together for the highest interests of the whole, must have promoted concord and tended to unity.

At **Heathfield** (Bishops Hatfield), seven years afterwards (680 A.D.), a **synod** formally declared its acceptance of "the true and orthodox faith as our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, and as it is delivered in the Creed of the Holy Fathers (Nicene), and of all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church, and more particularly, "we have received the five holy and general councils," &c., viz., the five general councils which had been held up to that date, Nicæa, 325; Constantinople, 381; Ephesus, 431; Chalcedon, 451; Constantinople, 553;—the sixth council was held at Constantinople that same year, 680-1.

Theodore's great work, next to that of organising the churches into an ecclesiastical province—uniting them into the Church of England—was subdividing the dioceses. One king, one bishop, was an idea to which some of the old bishops clung; but Theodore's practical mind saw that the duties of the episcopate could not be fulfilled by one man in such dioceses as the Northumbrian and Mercian kingdoms constituted. At the Council of Hertford (673) above mentioned, Bisi, Bishop of the East Angles, being disabled by infirmity, Theodore took the opportunity to divide that kingdom into two sees, of which the first was situated at Dunwich, and the second was placed at Elmham. At the same time it was agreed, with the concurrence of Ethelred, king of Mercia, and Othere, the sub-king of the Wiccii, that the latter people should have a bishop of their own; and probably that the recently acquired territory on the Severn, which is now the county of Hereford, should be erected into a separate diocese. Winfrid, Bishop of Lichfield, opposed the scheme, but was deposed in 675, and in 680 the partition of the diocese was completed by the Council of Hatfield. At this latter council it was also resolved to subdivide the great Northumbrian diocese, making York the see of Deira, and Lindisfarne the see of Bernicia, besides ordaining a bishop for the province of Lindsey. Wilfrid was not consulted, probably because his determined opposition was foreseen. Three years later a further subdivision was determined upon, making Hexham a see, and severing Whitherne from the Pictish province subject to Northumbria. Against this subdivision of his great diocese Wilfrid protested in vain, and went off to Rome to seek the intervention of its Bishop. It is the earliest example in our history

of an appeal to Rome as to a higher court of jurisdiction.

Thrown by a storm on the coast of Frisia, Wilfrid showed the better side of his character by employing the winter in the conversion of the king and his chief men, which carried with it the conversion of the whole people.

At Rome he obtained from Pope Agatho and a local synod a judgment that the subdivision of his diocese without his concurrence was wrong, and a decree that Wilfrid should be reinstated and the intruded bishops removed; but that it was right that the huge diocese should be divided, and that Wilfrid, assisted by a council, should choose new bishops, and Theodore should consecrate them. But when Wilfrid returned to Northumbria with this decision, the Pope's bull was contemptuously tossed aside, and Wilfrid was imprisoned for his disloyalty to church and crown. After a time he was set at liberty but driven into exile.

Again a storm at sea cast him on the coast at Selsey, and here again his missionary zeal exhibited itself in the conversion of the people, and **the planting of the church in the kingdom of the South Saxons**, among whom he spent five years. Then Theodore sought a reconciliation with him, and at his intercession he was restored to the bishopric of Hexham, and on the death of Cuthbert he obtained Lindisfarne also.

But again he quarrelled with the king and the church, and again appealed to Rome. Pope John VI. pronounced in his favour, but again the English Church refused to listen to the decision of Rome. After a while, however, a synod offered to restore Wilfrid to Ripon and Hexham, and, broken in health and tamed in spirit, he accepted a refuge where he could end his active, contentious, brilliant

life in peace. He died in 709 A.D. It was lamentable that, through the blunder of Theodore and Ecgfrid, and the impracticable temper of Wilfrid, the best years of the greatest genius the English Church had produced should have been lost to his native country.

Besides the subdivision of dioceses, Theodore is said to have promoted the settlement of parishes, by encouraging the landowners to build churches and appropriate the tithes of their own estates to the maintenance of their own priest. This accounts for the irregular size and endowment of parishes, and for the lay patronage of parochial benefices.

The Anglo-Saxon dioceses are conveniently shown in the following table:—

KINGDOMS.	SEES.
Kent . . .	Canterbury.
„ . . .	Rochester.
East Saxons . . .	London.
East Angles . . .	Dunwich.
„ . . .	Elanham.
West Saxons . . .	Winchester.
„ . . .	Sherborne.
„ . . .	Crediton
„ . . .	Wells
„ . . .	Ramsbury
„ . . .	Cornwall
Mercia . . .	Lichfield.
„ . . .	Hereford.
„ . . .	Worcester.
„ . . .	Lindsey (Lidnacester).
„ . . .	{ Leicester, removed to Dorchester about 870.
South Saxons . . .	Selsey.
Northumbria . . .	York.
„ . . .	Lindisfarne.
„ . . .	Hexham.
„ . . .	Witherne.

ERRATUM.

Page 57, line 15, *for* "Egfrid" *read* "Egbert."



In the eighth century the Northumbrian Church was foremost in the introduction and cultivation of the learning and fine arts which formed part of the Christian civilisation of the Continent. Benedict Biscop, a young man of noble birth and considerable wealth, brought masons from France to build for him a monastery at Wearmouth, and afterwards built a second monastery at Jarrow, on the Continental model, and made several journeys to France and Italy as far as Rome, collecting both paintings and works of art for the enrichment of his foundations. The monasteries of Wilfrid at Ripon and Hexham were similar centres of religious learning and art.

At Jarrow Bede gathered the learning which gave him a European reputation. A little later, Egfrid, a man of royal birth, when made Bishop of York (732 A.D.), gathered learned men around him, and accumulated what was for the time a great library, and made the schools of York famous throughout Europe. Alcuin, the master of this school, was induced by Charles the Great to undertake the duty of elevating the learning of his empire. York continued to be a great centre of religion and learning till the invasion of the Danes at the close of the century.

At the same time Aldhelm, a scion of the royal family of Wessex, and a pupil of Theodore and Hadrian, made Bishop of Sherborne in 705 A.D., raised up a school of learned men in Wessex, and made it for the first half of the century the rival of the school of York. From one of the monasteries of his foundation, at Nutselle in Hampshire, went forth Winifrid, afterwards known as Boniface, with a company of monks to be the Apostle of Germany. At Bradford-on-Avon has recently been

brought to light a very interesting Romanesque church, perfect and unaltered, which is probably the original church of the abbey founded there by Aldhelm in 705 A.D.

In the eighth century the political power of **Mercia** grew under three bold and enterprising kings, Æthelbald, Offa, and Cenwulf (716-819). Offa pushed back the Welsh within the limit marked by "Offa's dyke," and brought all the smaller kingdoms of the south, Sussex, Kent, Essex, and East Anglia, more or less completely under his power.

He seems to have thought it became his dignity to follow the example set by Northumbria, and to obtain for his kingdom the dignity of being a separate ecclesiastical province, and applied to the Bishop of Rome for the honour of the pall for his chief bishop. The Archbishop of Canterbury was too much in his power to offer any resistance. A council was held at Cealchythe, 783 A.D., attended by two legates from Rome, who, however, took no ostensible part in the proceedings, the council consented to the arrangement desired by the king, and the dioceses of Mercia were constituted a separate province with Lichfield for its metropolitan see. After Offa's death, however, a council at Cloveshoe, 803 A.D., restored the ancient arrangement without opposition from the Mercian bishops.

In the ninth century **Wessex** obtained the supremacy over the other kingdoms. Egbert returned from exile (802 A.D.), having learned the arts of war and government at the court of Charles the Great. Before he died in 839 A.D., he had made himself overlord of all the other kingdoms; over Kent, Sussex, and Essex he had appointed sub-kings of his own family; Mercia,



Northumbria, and East Anglia retained their native princes, but subject to the supreme authority of Egbert. This authority was so firmly established that it descended to his successors, so that Egbert is rightly accounted the first king of England.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *FROM THE DANISH INVASIONS TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST*

ABOUT the end of the eighth century history partially repeated itself in a **new series of barbarian invasions**, in which for a century the English suffered at the hands of the Danes the miseries which their ancestors had inflicted upon the Romano-Britons. At first armies of the Danes, landing upon various parts of the coast, marched inland, harried the country, and retired with their booty ; then they began to make permanent settlements. They seized East Anglia, separated from the rest of the country by rivers and fens, and made it a Danish colony ; they made themselves masters of the towns of the midlands, and from them ruled the country round about ; at length the victories of Guthrum in Wessex left no English opponents of the Danish rule in the field.

No sentiment of religion restrained the heathen invaders from assailing the Church, and the wealth of the monasteries and great churches made them special objects of attack. The monasteries of Northumbria, Lindisfarne, Whitby, Coldingham, Wearmouth, and Jarrow, Ripon, Hexham, and York, the great religious houses of the Fen country, Peterborough, Crowland, Ramsey, Thorney, and Ely, were plundered and left in ruins.

Learning died out from among the oppressed people. It seemed as if the English rule was about to pass away as the Roman had done, and Scandinavian rule to take its place, and the old heathendom to revive.

It is the glory of *Ælfred* (871-901 A.D.) that he rescued the English monarchy from extinction and the English race from its misery. Issuing from his retreat amidst the marshes of the Parret, he inflicted a great defeat upon Guthrum at Ethandun (Edington, 878 A.D.), and dictated peace on the conditions that he and his Danes should receive baptism, and should retire from Wessex and its dependencies, Sussex, Kent, and the western half of Mercia, holding the rest of England in (nominal) subjection to *Ælfred*. The work which *Ælfred* the Great had begun was continued by a succession of able kings, his son and grandsons, Eadward the Unconquered, *Æthelstan* the Illustrious, Eadmund the Magnificent, Eadred the Excellent, and Eadgar the Peaceful ; by the middle of the tenth century the whole country had been won back under English rule and the Danish settlers thoroughly amalgamated with the native English, so that the distinction between the men of kindred races soon disappeared.

As soon as *Ælfred* had won peace he proceeded at once to revive learning and religion. His own account of the condition to which the country had been brought is as follows : "There was a time when foreigners sought wisdom and learning in this island, now we are compelled to seek them in foreign lands." "Few on this side Humber, and I dare say not many on the other, could understand the service in English or translate a Latin epistle into their own language. So few were they, that I do not recollect a single individual to the south of Thames who was able to do it when I ascended

the throne." When Ælfred founded a monastery at Athelney in thanksgiving for his victory there, he had to bring monks from France to fill it; none of his own subjects were, or were willing to become, monks; from the destruction of the monasteries by the Danes till their revival in the time of Dunstan, nobody observed monastic rule; those who had the vocation went to foreign monasteries, or lived as hermits in the ruins of the old monasteries. The revival of convents of women was more successful. Ælfred founded Shaftesbury and placed it under his daughter Ethelgeove, and in the succeeding reigns others were founded.

The king sought for learned men in other countries. Presbyter John and Provost Grimbald from France, Asser from St. Davids, helped the king to found a Palatine school at his court, to which he intrusted his son, and he wished his thanes to do the same, and "added a number of children from the lower classes." But the school does not seem to have survived him; war engaged men's energies; education languished till, under Eadger, it received a new impulse from Dunstan and his colleagues.

**Eadger** (959-975 A.D.) was an able and powerful king, and **Dunstan** was the king's closest friend and chief adviser. When Dunstan was made Archbishop of Canterbury, he consecrated Ælfstan to London and Oswald to Worcester. These three prelates were the great movers in the revival of religion, learning, and the arts which distinguished the reign of Eadger. They adopted the policy of **restoring the discipline and vitality of the monasteries**, as the best agencies for recovering the country from the ignorance and irreligion which had been brought upon it by the Danish wars. They rebuilt and restored the great monasteries

of the east—Peterborough, Ely, Ramsey, and Thorney ; they restored the other monasteries up and down the south and midland districts, establishing in them the Benedictine rule. These reforms caused a great outcry, and very likely many cases of hardship occurred in the replacement of married abbots and clerks and monks, and the enforcement of the strict Benedictine discipline. Æthelwold especially seems to have acted arbitrarily in turning out the secular canons from his cathedral of Winchester to replace them by monks. Oswald contented himself with leaving the secular canons in possession of Worcester Cathedral and transferring his episcopal chair to the neighbouring monastery. Dunstan made no change at Canterbury (it was Ælfric in 1003 who introduced the monks into that cathedral); all the other cathedrals remained in the possession of secular canons till the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. Dunstan is the first English example of the great ecclesiastic called to fulfil the duties of a great minister, which was so common in after ages. And the reigns in which Dunstan was the royal adviser were successful reigns ; the country had peace and grew in prosperity ; religion revived, and learning and the arts began to be successfully cultivated in the monastic schools. The misrule and misery which followed after his death helped by contrast to bring into greater prominence the prosperity of the thirty years of Dunstan's influence, and to make him the popular saint of the mother church of Canterbury, till his memory was eclipsed by the more tragic interest which made St. Thomas illustrious as the martyr-defender of the immunities of the Church.

Eadger died leaving two boys. Edward the Martyr was murdered after a reign of four years, and was suc-

ceeded by Æthelred the Unready (without counsel). Early in his reign **new swarms of Danes and Norwegians** began to make descents upon the country. In 1012 they murdered Ælphea (St. Alphage), now Archbishop of Canterbury, on his refusal to burden his people with the price of the ransom demanded of him. In 1013 Sweyn came with a great army, the country submitted to him, and Æthelred fled to Normandy. On the death of the two kings, their sons, Canute and Edmund Ironside, succeeded to their father's claims, and, after much fighting, agreed to divide the kingdom for their lifetime, with succession to the survivor. Edmund died in 1016, and **Canute** the Dane remained king of Denmark and of England. He ruled justly and wisely, and endeavoured to promote the prosperity and revive the religion of England; he restored all the holy places which had in any way suffered during his own and his father's wars, from Glastonbury to St. Edmundsbury, founded new churches, and was a munificent benefactor to the Church. In 1027 (?) he made the pilgrimage to Rome. On his death his son Horthacanute brought over a force of Danes and began to rule England as a conquered land; on his death in 1042, the English invited **Eadward**, the son of Æthelred, the representative of their old kings, to resume the throne of his fathers.

**The Saxons were skilful in some of the arts; their MSS. were magnificent specimens of writing in large, bold, perfectly formed letters, ornamented in a peculiar style of interlaced ribbon-work, which probably came from the East, since there are examples of it in Syria, Greece, and Italy, but it is found in its greatest profusion and perfection in the MSS. and stone monuments of the Celtic and Northumbrian schools; their embroidery was famous beyond the bounds of the island; they seem to**

have practised the art of enamelling before it was used in the other European countries; but in all their early works, the attempts at representing the human figure are childishly ignorant and rude. The revival of learning under Dunstan and his colleagues was accompanied by a revival of art. Dunstan himself was famous for his artistic skill. The Benedictional of St. Ethelwold, in the library of the Duke of Devonshire, is a magnificent example of the illuminator's work, and the numerous figures of saints and angels show the influence of the finest Byzantine art; the Psalter of Æthelstan, of a little later date, shows the growing influence of a classical revival. Of their architecture we know little. The recently discovered church at Bradwell is of hewn stone in Romanesque style, very interesting archæologically, but not a fine example of design. Not a single Saxon cathedral remains, and the fact that the first Norman bishops everywhere without exception built new ones seems to indicate that there was nothing of them worth preserving. (The East Anglian cathedral at Elmham was of timber.)

For a long time past England had had little intercourse of any kind with the Continent of Europe, and its intellectual and religious life had not been much affected by the currents of Continental thought and feeling; neither had it developed any novelties of its own. It had maintained its constitution in Church and State; in doctrine, discipline, and ritual the English Church had retained the traditions of its seventh-century founders. It was credulous about miracles and dreams and visions, and superstitious about relics; it believed in the purgatory of which Gregory the Great had been the first great exponent; but the theory of transubstantiation, by which the schoolmen had recently tried to explain

the mystery of the Sacrament in terms of a philosophy which is now exploded, had not reached the English mind ; and there had been no attempt as yet to extend to England the Papal supremacy, which was rapidly reducing the Continental churches to the Roman obedience.

With the reign of **Edward the Confessor** begins a new period in the history of the Church of England. His father, Ethelred, had married Emma, sister of Richard Duke of Normandy, and Edward had been brought up at the Norman court, and, when called to the throne of England in 1042 at the age of forty, he brought with him his Norman ideas. England, so long depressed by the Danish wars, was behind Normandy in civilisation, and Edward was no doubt influenced by the highest politic motives as well as by his personal predilections in filling his court with Normans and placing them in high offices.

In order to understand the change in the relations of the Church of England to the See of Rome which began under Edward the Confessor, it is necessary to introduce here a digression on the recent history of the **Roman Church**.

The peaceful revolution which placed Pepin and his descendants on the throne of the Franks in place of the effete Merovingian dynasty, owed something of its success, and the new dynasty owed much of its prestige, to the moral sanction which the Pope of the time gave to the transaction. Very shortly after the new king of the Franks made a royal payment for the service which Zacharias had done him by driving the Lombards out of the Exarchate of Ravenna and bestowing it upon the See of Rome (755 A.D.). **This was the beginning of the Temporal Power of the Popes.** For a time they



held the new acquisition as a fief of the Frankish crown, but when the great feudatories of the Empire took advantage of the weakness of Charles's successors to assume independent sovereignty, the Popes also got rid of their subjection and ruled as sovereign princes. This aggrandisement of the See carried with it its disadvantages.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, owing to the growth of population, the cultivation of wild lands, and the consequent increase of wealth, many of the great European Sees had become very wealthy, and the feudal rights of bishops and abbots over their own domains had raised them to the dignity of great feudal lords. The result was that where princes nominated to these great benefices, they often conferred them upon their own relations, or bestowed them as rewards of service or gifts of favour, or sold them to the highest bidder; where these great benefices were the subject of election, they became the objects of intrigue and bribery, and often a great family in the neighbourhood studied to obtain such a preponderating influence with the electoral body as would place the benefice at their disposal.

The men thus appointed to the great benefices of the Church had often no true vocation for holy orders, and neglected the duties of their office; their neglect and bad example affected the character of the lower clergy and of the laity; learning grew scarce and discipline lax among the clergy; the laity grew up ignorant and irreligious.

The Roman See was the greatest prize of the Church, and its possession was the great object of rival factions of the Italian nobles. Its history during this period affords the most horrible example of the corruption into which the Church had fallen. Baronius, one of the

great Papal historians, is obliged to admit that during this period fifty Popes succeeded one another "of whom many secured possession of the See by fraud or money, or by worse expedients," *i.e.*, by murder; and many of them lived lives of open and extreme profligacy. This condition of the Church had caused great discontent and not a little disaffection among the people. At the end of the tenth century there was a desire for a reform of abuses, and any movement in this direction was sure of strong popular sympathy. This movement sprang up in Rome itself. Hildebrand, an Italian monk of the new order of Clugny, was the soul of it, and a series of Popes were the chief agents of a great reformation. Hildebrand had come into contact with Pope Leo IX. at the very beginning of his reign, obtained his confidence and became his trusted adviser, not only his, but that of his four successors, and he himself succeeded after them, so that **Hildebrand** was the soul of the Papacy during six reigns, from 1049 to 1085. Hildebrand's theory was that the Bishop of Rome was a kind of spiritual emperor, and all baptized Christians his subjects, and that he had by divine right supreme authority not only over prelates, but over princes.

Leo adopted the novel method of making a **personal visitation of the churches**, holding councils at important centres for the correction of abuses. In Italy no one objected to his authority; in Germany he had the support of the Emperor, his cousin; his visitation of France was an invasion of the rights of the French king and Church, but public opinion was strongly on the side of the reforming Pope; the king did not venture to oppose him, and the clergy submitted to him. This bold measure gave a great impulse to the work of reform, and greatly increased the prestige of the Papal See; for

the general submission established the claim of the Pope to be the corrector of abuses in the churches and the censor of morals of the whole body of the faithful. Primitive discipline was restored in the monastic orders ; new orders with a stricter rule were founded. As sees and benefices fell vacant, many of them were refilled with men of the new school, and a very general revival of religion was in progress throughout the Continent of Europe.

**England was outside the sphere of the Popes' reforms**, and its isolation put it almost beyond the reach of their influence ; indeed, the domestic troubles in which the country had been so long involved had saved it from the worst abuses which have been described.

**King Edward** was of somewhat feeble character, whose principal trait was a piety entirely in harmony with the new school, and carried to fanatical extremes. He was a vowed celibate notwithstanding his politic marriage of Earl Godwin's daughter ; he thought that he saw visions and received miraculous intimations ; he believed that his touch cured the "king's evil ;" he vowed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and built Westminster Abbey as the price of absolution from his vow. He recognised the backwardness of the English Church, and thought that the best way to improve it was by **introducing eminent foreigners of the new school** into its higher offices as opportunity should occur. Accordingly, on the vacancy of the See of London in 1044 A.D., Edward nominated Robert of Jumièges, who obtained great influence over the king's mind. In the next year, 1045, he nominated Herman of Lotharingia to Ramsbury ; Ulf, a Norman, to Dorchester in 1049 ; Leofric to Exeter in 1050 ; and in 1051,

refusing the Saxon priest preferred by the Witan, the king promoted Robert of Jumièges to the See of Canterbury, and passed over another Saxon nominated to London in favour of William, a Norman ; and in 1061 he nominated Giso, a Lorrainer, to Wells. But the king's fondness for foreigners was offensive to the popular patriotism, it threatened to undermine the political power which Earl Godwin and his family had obtained in the country, and led to a revolt before which the Norman favourites fled. Godwin and his family were banished for their share in this revolt, but returned in a few months, and the king found himself unable to resist their reinstatement. The same Witan which restored Godwin declared Robert of Canterbury and Ulf of Dorchester outlawed, but allowed William to retain the See of London on account of his good character ; the same Witan promoted Stigand, the ecclesiastical adviser of Cnut and Godwin, to the See of Canterbury. **Stigand's** position was, however, a doubtful one even in the estimation of his friends. Robert of Jumièges still claimed the See and filled the courts of Europe with the story of his wrongs. There were at the time two claimants of the Papal See, and Stigand continued six years without seeking the recognition of either of them, wearing, it was said, the pall of his predecessor, until at last he received his pall from Honorius, the Anti-Pope. Some of the new bishops elected in his time, viz., Giso of Wells and Walter of Hereford, declined to receive consecration from him, and went to Rome and were consecrated by the Pope. So that the influence of the new school of religious thought was being introduced into England by King Edward and his foreign bishops. The English Church was

entering into an intercourse with the Continental Church greater than at any period since Romano-British times, and the way was being prepared for the inclusion of the Church of England within the patriarchate of the Roman See, which William formally carried into effect.

## CHAPTER IX

### *THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PAPAL SUPREMACY OVER THE ENGLISH CHURCH*

It is not necessary even to summarise here a portion of English history so familiar as the Norman Conquest; its effect upon the Church of England is what this history is especially concerned with.

Normandy was within the patriarchate of Rome. William had submitted to the Pope's censure of his marriage within the forbidden degrees, and had built two abbeys at Caen as the price of the Papal dispensation. He was under especial obligation to the Roman See, for the Pope had sanctioned his invasion of England as a holy war, and the battle of Senlac was fought under a banner which the Pope had blessed.

The Conquest brought England for the first time into the family of the European nations, and the Conqueror would take its inclusion into the Western Patriarchate as a necessary consequence. He had occasion to seek at once for the Pope's intervention in the affairs of the English Church. The position of Archbishop Stigand, as has been stated, was one of doubtful legality, and was likely to lead to great difficulties. Besides, both King and Pope had their own reasons for desiring to be rid of him. That Stigand had recognised the Anti-Pope Honorius, and received his pall from him, was

to the Pope sufficient reason for disliking and excuse for deposing him. The king had still better reasons. Stigand had been for many years the chaplain of Godwin, the partisan of his house, and one of the chief leaders of the anti-Norman party. It was by the influence of the house of Godwin that he had been made archbishop; and he had crowned Harold. His prompt submission after the battle of Senlac, and the service he had rendered in inducing the English to accept the Conqueror as their king, did not save him. But what native tribunal could try the archbishop? It was precisely the kind of extraordinary case which might justify, if anything could, an appeal to a foreign authority, and William invited the Pope to send two legates to deal with it. It was not the king's policy, however, to bring back Robert of Jumièges, so the charges against Stigand omitted the question of the validity of Stigand's appointment while Robert was still living, and rested upon the rather inadequate charges of having recognised the Anti-Pope and received his pall from him, and of having held the See of Winchester *in commendam* with that of Canterbury. On these grounds a synod held at Winchester (1070) under the presidency of the two legates **deposed the archbishop**, and he was committed to prison, in which soon afterwards he miserably perished. His deposition involved that of his brother, Æthelmar, Bishop of Elmham, and of Æthelric, Bishop of Selsey, on the ground that their consecration by Stigand was invalid. Circumstances favoured the desire of the king to have the sees occupied by men who would be loyal to himself. The Bishop of Durham had incurred the penalties of treason; York and Lichfield were vacant by death; London, Hereford, Wells, Ramsbury, Exeter had been filled up by foreigners of the Confessor's

appointment; the Norman Remigius had been appointed to Dorchester since the battle of Senlac. The vacancies were filled by the Conqueror; the two remaining sees, Worcester and Rochester, were allowed to retain their native bishops. Many of the greater abbots were deprived and Normans put in their places. It is right to say that William's nominees to the sees were all able men, some of them learned and pious. For though the Conqueror was ambitious, stern, relentless, there was a strain of righteousness in his character; he was not only a great captain, but a great statesman, and he desired the welfare of the country of which he had made himself king; and though he made no great professions of religion, his ecclesiastical policy was directed to the promotion of learning and religion.

The minister of his ecclesiastical policy was LANFRANC, late abbot of William's monastery at Caen, whom he nominated to the See of Canterbury. It was a good appointment both for the king and the Church. The new archbishop had obtained his reputation as a scholar and theologian, but he was also a man of strong sense and practical ability, such as the office and the time required. Prepared to accept the visitatorial office of the See of Rome over the English Church, but equally resolute not to admit any undue exercise of the power, he did not go in person to Rome for the pall; when Gregory VII. invited him to visit Rome as an act of deference to the See, he declined, and when the Pope finally summoned him with threats, he ignored the summons.

In settling the relations between the English Church and the See of Rome, William took up a clear and firm position. While bringing the English Church into the organised ecclesiastical system of the Western Patri-



archate, and recognising the general visitatorial authority of the Roman See, he stringently safeguarded the rights of the English crown and Church. He laid it down that no legate should visit England or any bull be received into the country without the license of the crown; on the other hand, that no appeal should be made from England to the Roman See without his leave; so that the interference of the Pope was limited to emergencies worthy of so great an authority, and of what constituted such an emergency the crown was the judge in each particular case.

In regulating the affairs of England, the king also made an alteration in the relations which had hitherto existed between the Church and the State. The relations between the Church and the State in Saxon times had grown up out of the facts of the case. The mission bishops who converted the Saxons were most of them men of a superior type of civilisation to the rude people among whom they lived, and introduced among them higher ideas of law and administration and the arts of life, as well as of learning and religion. The first codes of law of some of the kingdoms, if not of all of them, were made under the advice of their bishops. The bishops and chief clergy sat habitually in the witenagemots; they assisted also in the administration of affairs, the bishop sitting with shire-reeve and ealdorman in the shire-moot to do justice in all cases, secular and ecclesiastical, which came before them; and the parish priests presided in the meetings of the township for the regulation of its local affairs. The relations of Church and State were very intimate; no attempt had been made to discriminate their several spheres; it was enough that they worked satisfactorily. No doubt this old constitution was rude and unscientific, and the king undertook

to amend it. By a charter (probably of 1086 A.D.) he decreed that the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions should be divided, and that henceforth no bishop or archdeacon should hold pleas concerning ecclesiastical matters in the hundred court, and that no cause relating to the cure of souls should be brought before a secular judge ; but that every person summoned in an ecclesiastical cause or charge should appear before the bishop wherever he should appoint, and there answer, not according to the hundred law, but according to the canons and ecclesiastical laws ; and if any should refuse to appear or to obey the bishop's judgment, the sheriff of the county should bring him to reason ; but that no sheriff, magistrate, or king's officer should meddle with laws belonging to the bishop. The king also decreed that the clergy in their synods, no longer attended by king and nobles, should make no new laws without the king's assent ; and that sentence of excommunication should not be passed upon tenants *in capite* without the king's license.

The necessary consequence was the organisation of ecclesiastical courts. Every bishop had to make arrangements for dealing with the cases which were thus brought before him. The bishop could not devote sufficient time to it, and was obliged to commission officials to represent and act for him. Persons learned in ecclesiastical law were needed to conduct the causes of those who came before these courts, and, in short, all the machinery of a system for the administration of this new judicature had to be created. The ecclesiastical courts had jurisdiction over all the clergy, and the various orders of the clergy included a very large number of persons, nearly all persons of any education ; so that, till a very recent period, the fact of

being able to read was accepted as evidence that a man belonged to the clergy, and entitled him to the privilege of clergy, that is, exempted him from the jurisdiction of the civil courts. The ecclesiastical courts took cognisance of all that belonged to the clergy in their daily life and conduct as well as in their ministry. The jurisdiction comprised all causes relating to the faith and morals of the laity; all questions arising about marriages, legitimacy, wills, administration of intestates' estates, fiduciary and pledging contracts, promises and keeping of oaths. The result of all this was to make the clergy a privileged class, governed by their own officers according to their own laws, and to give the bishops authority over wide spheres of the social life and business of the whole people.

A very useful reform made at the Synod of London (1075) was **the removal of some of the Sees** from villages to the principal cities within their jurisdiction; thus Sherborne was transferred to Old Sarum (afterwards to Salisbury in 1218); Selsey to Chichester; Lichfield to Chester (afterwards to Coventry in 1095); Elmham to Thetford (removed again to Norwich in 1094); and subsequently, in 1095, Dorchester to Lincoln.

**The Normans were great builders;** every bishop rebuilt his cathedral church. The new religious orders were in the full blaze of their reputation and usefulness, and it was the fashion for a great baron to found a monastery, just as it had been for a Saxon lord of a manor to build a church on his estate.

Lanfranc survived the Conqueror by seventeen years, and during that time his powerful influence controlled the conduct of Rufus and kept the affairs of the Church and kingdom in order. On Lanfranc's death (1090), the king at once entered upon other courses. He kept

the See of Canterbury vacant for three years; it was part of a new device of keeping sees and abbacies vacant, and appropriating the revenues to the royal exchequer. At length, in 1093, Rufus was taken with an illness which threatened his life, and then he consented, among other acts of tardy repentance, to fill the vacant archbishopric.

**Anselm**, who had succeeded Lanfranc at Caen, happened to be in England at the time; his great reputation for learning and sanctity led the bishops and nobles to press him upon the king as the right man for the archbishopric. Anselm recognised the difficulties of the position and his unfitness to cope with them. "You would yoke an old sheep," he said, "with a fiery steed to draw the plough of England;" but the office was forced upon him.

Anselm was not only the most famous theologian of his day, but one of the great theologians of the Middle Ages; his work, *Cur Deus homo*—Why God became man—is still a work of authority. He was, besides, of saintly character; but he was a failure as archbishop. For one thing, he was wholly in favour of the lofty views which had lately been put forward as to the Papal supremacy, and would have entirely surrendered the liberties of the English crown and Church had he been allowed; and for another thing, he had not the practical statesmanlike ability which his office required, and which the difficulties of the time made exceptionally needful; the greater part of his episcopate during the reign of Rufus was spent in exile, while the ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom were running into worse confusion.

The king recovered from his sickness, and occasion of disagreement arose at once between him and the new archbishop. It was the custom for a newly appointed prelate to make a present to the king. Anselm offered

£500;\* the king refused it. Anselm declared that he could not give more without oppressing the tenants of the See, and when the king still refused to accept it, he gave it in alms to the poor.

Then Anselm requested permission to go to Rome to receive his pall. This raised two difficulties. First, the question of going to Rome in person for the pall. In earlier times the pall had been a merely complimentary decoration; Gregory the Great had begun the practice of limiting it to archbishops. In the course of the constantly growing claims of the Roman See, Nicholas I. (A.D. 866) had started the theory that a new archbishop could not legitimately enter upon the duties of his office till he had received the pall, *i.e.*, till he had received the Papal recognition, which had the effect of giving the Pope a power of intervention in the appointment of archbishops. A little later it was claimed that the confirmation by the Pope of an archbishop's election was necessary to the validity of his consecration, and that the pall was the token of this confirmation. Lastly, the Hildebrandine Popes had begun to require a new archbishop to go to Rome in person to solicit the pall, and the opportunity was taken to require from him homage and oaths of fealty to the Roman See. The effect of it was to put a check upon the right of nomination, and to diminish the royal authority over some of its most powerful subjects. So far as it was the object of the Hildebrandine party to hinder princes from making bad appointments, we may sympathise with them; but inasmuch as it was also the object of the Popes to make the bishops of the Church everywhere the ministers of their ecclesiastical monarchy, directly

\* Equivalent to £8000 to £10,000 of our present money.

dependent upon themselves and under their command, we must object to this invasion of the liberties of National Churches. The king opposed the encroachment upon the long-established custom under which the crown had exercised the right of nomination to sees and great abbeys, and had received homage and oaths of fealty on induction. What had grown into a custom in the latter portion of the Saxon period, William the Conqueror had established as part of the royal prerogative. The son of the Conqueror and the pupil of Lanfranc was not ignorant of policy or likely to yield any of his royal right. Therefore the proposal of the new archbishop to go to Rome to receive the pall in person from the Pope was not likely to meet with a ready assent.

But there was another difficulty. There were **two rival Popes in the field**. Gregory VII. had supported Rudolf in the attempt to oust Henry IV. from his place as Emperor of Germany, and Henry had retorted by promoting the election (Whitsuntide 1080) of a rival Pope under the title of Clement III. On the death of Gregory (1085), his party had, after many difficulties and in an irregular manner, elected Urban II. (March 1088). The Conqueror had expressly claimed for the crown the right to decide between rival claimants to the Papacy, and hitherto the king had made no decision in this case, and the Church of England was not committed to either Pope. When Anselm asked leave to seek his pall from the Pope, the king asked, "Which Pope?" and Anselm replied, "Urban." "But I have not acknowledged him;" and he accused Anselm of a breach of his oath of fealty in taking upon himself to recognise Urban.

It seems probable that the king had made up his

mind to recognise Urban, but that he desired to obtain some concessions as the price of his recognition of the Pope's title, and the subsequent proceedings make it seem likely that one of these concessions was the right of giving the pall to his own archbishops. The king at once sent agents to Rome, who seem to have proposed some such compromise. They returned accompanied by a legate from Urban, and the legate brought the pall with him. Then the king proclaimed Urban as Pope without consultation with his archbishop. The Pope had obtained the recognition of England, and the king on his side had obtained that his archbishop should not be required to go to Rome to fetch his pall. But now the Pope put in practice one of those clever compromises by which the subtlety of the Italian See has so often evaded its difficulties. The Pope did not send the pall direct to Anselm; neither did he give it to the king that he might bestow it; the legate laid it on the altar of Canterbury Cathedral, and the archbishop took it from the altar and endued himself with it.

The peace between the violent king and the inflexible prelate did not last long. The king soon after took steps to bring the archbishop to trial on the charge that the troops he had furnished for the Welsh war were insufficient in number and equipment; no doubt intending to harass him into submission. Anselm asked leave to go to Rome to consult the Pope; the king refused, and threatened him that if he went without leave he would seize the archbishopric and never suffer him to return. The inflexible prelate nevertheless went, and the violent king fulfilled his threats.

Anselm's exile gave him leisure to write the book *Cur Deus homo* already mentioned, and to take an important

part in the Council at Bari<sup>1</sup> (1098) which anathematised the Greek Church for its view on the Procession of the Holy Ghost, and created the breach which has ever since existed between the Churches of the East and West. He also attended a synod at Rome (the first time an Archbishop of Canterbury had appeared at a Roman synod), at which a canon was passed declaring excommunicate all laymen who gave investiture for cathedrals or abbeys, and those also who received investiture from lay hands or came under the tenure of homage for such promotions.

On the death of William II. and the accession of Henry (1100 A.D.), the new king hastened to invite Anselm to return to his See. On his arrival, the archbishop was required to receive reinvestiture, which was the formal confirmation of his status, and to do homage to the new king, as was usual at the beginning of a new reign. Anselm refused to comply, pleading the canon recently made at Rome.

When Anselm pleaded the recent canon, the king exclaimed, "**What have I to do with a Roman canon?**" and the king was right. Roman canons never had been received (and it may be added never afterwards were received) as of any authority in England; the English Church makes its own canons, and is governed by no other. Anselm declared roundly that unless the king thought fit to comply with the See of Rome, he would not stay in the country. Henry showed great moderation and discretion. He probably saw that with the Pope the new encroachment on the rights of princes was a matter of policy,

<sup>1</sup> It was at this council that the Pope seated the Archbishop of Canterbury on his right hand, and made use of the complimentary phrase that he was *Papa ultterioris orbis*.



to be insisted upon or withdrawn or moderated as circumstances might make it expedient, while Anselm made it a matter of conscience to obey the Pope; so he proposed that the question should rest till Easter following, an interval of about eight months, during which both sides should send agents to Rome to induce the Pope to dispense with the canon, and in the meantime Anselm was to be restored to the profits and jurisdiction of his See. The negotiations were greatly protracted, but at last the two parties agreed upon a compromise. The chapters were to have freedom of election; the consecration was committed to the metropolitan and com-provincial bishops; the bestowal of the temporal estates and jurisdiction was recognised as belonging to the crown, but the king was not to give investiture with staff and ring, which had the appearance of giving the bishops and abbots their spiritual character and authority, but the bishops and abbots were to do homage to the king, and swear fealty for their temporalities. The decision was formally settled at a meeting of bishops and nobles held in London A.D. 1107. The crown soon began to evade the conditions of the compromise, and, at first by exercising indirect influence on the chapters, and before long by sending a "letter-missive" together with the *congé d'élire*, it retained the actual nomination.<sup>1</sup>

One great motive of the crown for retaining the patronage of the Sees was that the kings had already adopted the policy of paying the ministers of their civil administration—secretaries of state, ambassadors, judges, and such like—not out of the revenues of the crown, nor out of the taxes of the people, but out of the benefices

<sup>1</sup> The quarrel of investitures a little later raged between the Emperor and the Pope, and was settled by a similar compromise.

of the Church ; so that the history of England during the Middle Ages contains a constant succession of names of **statesmen-bishops**. But it is necessary to discriminate between them. Some were bishops first and statesmen afterwards—bishops whose force of character and genius, joined to their high position, gave them influence in affairs of State, like Lanfranc, Langton, and others down to Laud ; others were statesmen first, who had all along been paid for their services by church benefices, and at length attained to the rank and revenues of a bishopric as to one of the highest prizes in the civil service, as Corbeuil, Peter des Roches, Becket while chancellor, Wykeham, Arundel, and many others down to Bishop Williams, the Lord Keeper of the reigns of James and Charles, who was the last of them. These latter performed their ecclesiastical duties by deputy, and in most cases their dioceses must have suffered by their absence ; but it must be admitted that some of them were equal to the double task, and were eminent for their services to the Church as well as to the State.

The "**freedom of election**" (which was nominally conceded by Henry II., which was guaranteed in the first clause of Magna Charta, which was formally given in each case by the *cong   d'  lire*, and which was practically violated by the letter-missive nominating a particular person to be elected), was the right of the Church to elect bishops who would do its work, and not to have men thrust into its highest offices by the king as payment for doing the king's work.

On the death of Henry, **Stephen** of Blois, the nephew of the late king and grandson of the Conqueror, was elected king, largely through the support of Henry's statesmen-bishops, and of Henry, Bishop of Winchester, Stephen's brother. The hereditary claims of Matilda,

the daughter of Henry, were, however, ably supported by her illegitimate half-brother, Robert, Earl of Salisbury, and a civil war followed, which soon degenerated into anarchy. Every man who could do it built a castle to protect himself from his neighbours; the barons waged war one against another; robber knights from their fortresses oppressed their defenceless neighbours, so that many fled from their houses for fear, and left whole tracts of country waste and uninhabited. It would seem at first sight as if this must have been a bad time for religion; but, perhaps owing in some measure to the very insecurity and misery in which people lived, there was a great and general revival of religious feeling, which extended to men of all ranks and classes in town and country. One feature of this religious revival was the foundation of new monasteries and the introduction of new orders of monks. It is not, perhaps, to be wondered at that 1115 new castles were built in this reign, but it is amazing to find that there were more monasteries built in it than in any other reign, in number more than a hundred. The power of the clergy was great in this reign; in the beginning of it, it had placed Stephen on the throne; in the latter part of it, it interposed to put an end to the civil strife. The bishops refused Stephen's desire to have his son Eustace crowned in his own lifetime as his successor, and when Henry Fitz-Empress appeared in arms to support his own claims, the bishops intervened between the hostile forces, and brought both rulers to accept a compromise, by which Stephen was to retain the throne for life, and Henry to inherit after him.

The Normans built great and strong castles, stately cathedrals, noble abbeys. No one can see Ely or Peterborough or Durham, or a dozen other churches which

might be mentioned, without being impressed with a sense of the grand conceptions and mastery of a noble style of architecture of the men who planned and built them. The proportions of the buildings are often fine, and the introduction of the cross ground plan for the great churches with central and western towers, gave a picturesqueness of grouping which was lacking in the exterior design of the earlier basilicas; the zigzag and other characteristic mouldings are rich but bizarre, and animal forms are introduced into the mouldings with a feeling approaching the grotesque; the attempts at the human figure are rude. In the latter part of the style the wall spaces were often covered with surface carving, which gave great richness of effect.

**The monastic institution** had just before the Norman Conquest experienced a grand revival, which had led to the reform of the Benedictine houses and the foundation of new orders based upon the Benedictine rule. The Norman nobles were great patrons of the institution, and it became a kind of fashion for every great noble to found a monastery on his estates, just as in earlier times it was the custom for a Saxon landowner to provide a parish priest. Of the new orders of the Benedictine family, the chief were the Clugniac, Cistercian, Carthusian. The new houses were often founded in wild parts of the country, and their first endowment consisted of a large tract of unreclaimed land. The skilful industry of the monks gradually brought the land under cultivation, and the houses became wealthy. At first they spent their wealth chiefly in noble churches with dignified cloister buildings attached. For some centuries the influence of the monasteries was great and beneficial. They were strongholds of religion and learning, pioneers of progress in civilisation, good and considerate landlords and kind to the poor; their abbots

mingled as equals with the territorial aristocracy, and helped to mould its opinions and customs. There were something less than a hundred monasteries at the Conquest ; William and his two successors added upwards of 300 ; many others were subsequently founded ; so that, by the end of the thirteenth century, great and wealthy abbeys, and still more numerous priories of smaller importance, were scattered everywhere over the country. After 1360 A.D. only some half-dozen new houses were built.

## CHAPTER X

### *THE CONFLICT OF JURISDICTIONS—THE CONSTITUTIONS OF CLARENDON*

THE accession of Henry II. introduces an important chapter of Church history. He was only twenty-one when he came to the throne, a young man of powerful physique and great force of character, of boundless ambition and restless energy, with enough of the soldier to serve his purpose, but more of a statesman than a soldier. His paternal inheritance added Anjou, and his marriage further added Aquitaine, to his maternal inheritance of England and Normandy. Thus the young king was the most powerful sovereign in Europe. He made no attempt at further conquests, but set himself to reduce his various dominions into order. In England his policy was to reduce the power of the great barons and establish the royal authority over the whole kingdom, and to reorganise and complete the administrative machinery which his grandfather Henry I. had created.

At the beginning of his reign, Archbishop Theodore had recommended **Thomas Becket** to his service. Thomas was the son of Gilbert Becket, a Norman merchant in Cheapside, London. He was educated in the house of the Canons of Merton and at the universities

of Paris and Bologna, and was taken into the service of Archbishop Theobald, who employed him as his agent at the Papal court. His patron had provided for him, according to the custom of the time, by giving him church benefices, the chief of which was the Archdeaconry of Canterbury, a position of great dignity and wealth. The king made Thomas his chancellor, and soon discovering his qualities, committed the affairs of England very greatly to his hands. The new chancellor, only thirty-eight years of age, was not only an able statesman but a pleasant companion, handsome in person, cultivated in mind, gay and cheerful in disposition, magnificent in his tastes; so that the young king entertained a personal friendship for him and treated him with familiarity. The chancellor took part in the war of Thoulouse in full armour at the head of 700 knights from his own estates, besides 1200 men-at-arms in his pay and 4000 footmen. When peace was made, the chancellor was sent as ambassador to France, with such a magnificent train that the beholders said, "If such was the chancellor, what was the king?" By the terms of the treaty the baby princess, Margaret of France, was betrothed to the infant son of Henry, and the two royal children were confided to the tutorship of the chancellor.

On his accession Henry had found the country in great disorder after the anarchy of the reign of Stephen. Every petty baron had built himself a castle, and did what he pleased on his own estates, and made war with his neighbours like an independent prince. Henry dismantled the castles which had been built without royal license. By commuting his claim upon his feudal vassals, of forty days' military service in every year, for a fixed payment (scutage), he was enabled to maintain

a large force dependent entirely upon himself, while indirectly discouraging the maintenance of the military following of the barons. At the same time he reorganised the ancient popular force of the *fyrð*, or militia, under the sheriffs of the counties, to secure order at home. He revived the importance of the Great Council and increased the number of its members. He strengthened the *Curia Regis*, and established a regular system of judges of assize and judges in eyre; his aim being to abolish feudal jurisdictions and to establish a system of equal law and justice for all men over the whole kingdom. In all this Becket was the king's right hand, and the wise policy and vigorous action of the king and his chancellor succeeded in establishing the royal authority over the secular jurisdictions. There remained one very important exception to the universality of the new system, to which the king next turned his attention.

The separation of the civil and ecclesiastical courts of the Conqueror had, as has been seen (see p. 76), resulted in the establishment of a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction all over the country, which claimed the clergy of all orders and ranks down to the parish clerk as its subjects to be judged in all causes by itself alone, and claimed authority over the whole world of laymen in certain causes, as doctrine and morals, marriages, wills, &c. The ecclesiastical courts had their own law, judges, processes, prisons, and penalties. In practice the ecclesiastical courts were more severe in dealing with moral offences and less severe in dealing with crime than the secular courts. As a glaring instance of the inequality which not infrequently occurred, a clerk who had committed a crime could not be tried



and punished by the king's court, but must be handed over to the ecclesiastical court, and often when found guilty of a crime for which the civil law would have hanged him without mercy, he got off with a term of imprisonment.

The king desired to do away with this separate jurisdiction of the bishops and abbots, as he had done with that of the barons and others, and to establish one law for all his subjects alike. On the death of Archbishop Theodore, it seemed to the king that the time had come to add this reform to the others which he had successfully accomplished; and it occurred to him as a master-stroke of policy to put into the position of archbishop the man who had been his counsellor and minister in the previous measures, and who would, he supposed, be in favour of this completion of the system.

Becket, when the king broached the subject to him, tried to turn it with a jest: "Fine clothes these are," pointing to his own handsome dress, "for an archbishop." When the king pressed the matter, Becket seriously warned him, "If you do as you say, my lord, you will soon hate me as much as you love me now; for you assume an authority in church affairs to which I should not consent; and there will be plenty of persons to stir up strife between us." The king persisted, and on Whitsunday Becket the chancellor was ordained priest, and on the following Sunday was consecrated bishop (and appointed the latter day to be thereafter observed as the festival of the Holy Trinity). The archbishop at once resigned the chancellorship, and began to lead an ascetic life, and to devote himself to the duties of his new office. He had been in

the service of the good Archbishop Theodore till the age of thirty-six; eight years of the king's service had not so changed him that he could not fall back easily into the ideas and habits in which he had been brought up.

Occasion of disagreement between the king and the archbishop soon arose. The archbishop excommunicated one who was the king's tenant *in capite* without the king's leave; on the other hand, the king demanded that a clerk who had committed murder should be handed over to the king's justice and Becket refused. The king then demanded that the archbishop should promise to obey the customs of the realm. The clergy and the king sent agents to the Pope to engage his influence. The Pope acted with the usual tortuous policy of the Roman Curia; temporised, gave ambiguous replies, said enough to encourage the archbishop without breaking with the king; did not sanction the king's proposals, but recommended the bishops not to quarrel with him.

Becket seems to have tried to follow this temporising policy. At length the king brought the matter to a head by summoning a Great Council to meet at Clarendon (1164 A.D.), directing the justiciar, with the help of some of the oldest barons, to put down in writing the customs observed in his grandfather's time, and requiring the clergy formally to accept them. These customs were drawn up under sixteen heads, known as the **Constitutions of Clarendon**. The most important of them declared that beneficed clergy should not leave the kingdom without the king's leave; that no tenant in chief should be excommunicated without the king's knowledge; that no villein should be ordained without his lord's consent; that a criminous clerk should be

tried in the king's court, and that after he had been convicted or had pleaded guilty, the Church should not protect him from the punishment sentenced by the lay court. On the other hand, the clergy were to retain their jurisdiction, subject to the right of the *Curia Regis* to determine what matters were properly to be decided by them. Moreover, no appeal was to be made to Rome without the permission of the *Curia Regis*.

At first sight, from our nineteenth-century point of view, the demands of the king seem reasonable. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the clergy were asked voluntarily to surrender rights and immunities which they actually enjoyed by the grant of former kings. The king's law and the king's courts mean to us equal justice between man and man, and even between the subject and the crown; but in those days they meant tyranny and injustice where the king's interests were concerned, and uncertain justice and cruel sentences even where it was no great man's interest to weight the scale. What the clergy had to determine was whether it was expedient to surrender the protection from arbitrary treatment and from a semi-barbarous jurisdiction which their own more scientific system of law and their own purer administration of it afforded. When the bishops were disposed to give way, the archbishop had to determine whether he would betray the interests of the vast number of persons who enjoyed these immunities for which his firmness was their sole security.

Behind these considerations lay another which had great weight with all parties. It was not merely a question of more or less equal justice to the individual, or the symmetry of a national system of jurisprudence;

it was also a question of the rivalry between the spiritual and the secular power, which the Hildebrandine Popes had started, and which had not yet attained its climax. The surrender by any national church of the privileges and immunities which it had acquired would have been like the capitulation of an army corps in the middle of a great campaign. Thomas was too much of a churchman by training and conviction not to be largely influenced by the latter consideration.

After some temporising and vacillation, Becket finally refused to accept the proposed Constitutions. Henry proceeded at once to take measures which would compel him to yield or crush him. An action was brought against the archbishop in the king's court, and on his refusal to appear in person he was condemned to forfeiture of all his personal property. Next an accusation was brought against him of malversation in his office of chancellor, notwithstanding that a formal discharge had been given him on his quitting office, and the council declared him a traitor. A scene of the highest dramatic interest took place in the ante-chamber of the council room when Becket, cross in hand, forbade the justiciar to announce to him the sentence of the council, replied with fierce contempt to the insults of the barons, and quitted the chamber, no man offering to lay hand upon him. But he recognised his danger, quitted the court in disguise, and fled. After hiding in the houses of the new Sempringham Order until pursuit was baffled, he at length reached the coast, crossed to the Continent, and for the next six years resided chiefly at the Cistercian monastery of Pontigny near Sens.

The king confiscated the revenues of the See, plundered Becket's relations and banished them, making them swear to go and present themselves in their ruin

and misery to the archbishop. After six years, the king desiring to secure the succession of the throne to his son Henry, had him recognised and crowned (1170 A.D.) by Roger, Archbishop of York. But on the day before the coronation Roger received notice that Becket had excommunicated all bishops who should take part in the coronation, in disregard of the rights which belonged to the See of Canterbury, and that the Pope had ratified the sentence. It was possible that the coronation by an excommunicated bishop might give rise to difficulties, and the validity of the whole transaction might be challenged.

To obviate this danger, Henry made overtures to Becket, had an interview with him in Normandy, in which a reconciliation was patched up, and the king invited the archbishop to return to England on the condition that the past should be forgotten on both sides. The king even proposed to put the administration of his affairs in England again into Becket's hands. Becket at once returned, and was received with great demonstrations of joy by the people. But he had prepared fresh trouble by sending before him a refusal to release from excommunication the bishops who had crowned young Henry unless they made satisfaction to the See of Canterbury. The bishops at once crossed the sea to Normandy to lay their complaint before Henry. "What would you have me do?" said the king. "Your barons must advise you," said one of the bishops, "but as long as Thomas lives you will never be at peace." "A curse on all the false varlets I have maintained," said the king, "who have left me so long subject to the insolence of a priest."

Four of his knights had heard the rash words. They started in haste for Canterbury and sought out the arch-

bishop. His servants persuaded him to retire to the church, but he would not allow the doors to be secured. The knights rushed in exclaiming, "Where is the traitor? where is the archbishop?" "Behold me," said Thomas, "no traitor, but a priest of God." One laid hold of him to drag him away from the altar at which he stood, but the archbishop cast him off. Then they attacked him with their swords; his cross-bearer, trying to ward off the first blow, was wounded; then another blow struck the archbishop on the head, inflicting a mortal wound; other blows followed, and they left him dead upon the spot.

The sympathies of the English people had been with the archbishop; the news of his murder excited general indignation not only in England but throughout Europe. The cause of the Church against the princes gained immense prestige through the "martyrdom," as it was called, of Becket. Henry found it necessary to bend to the storm. In 1172 A.D. he met the Pope's legates at Avranches, swore that he was innocent of the death of Thomas, and renounced the Constitutions of Clarendon. He had his son crowned over again to satisfy the scruples of King Louis about the former coronation. On his next visit to England he passed through Canterbury, spent the night before the shrine of the martyred archbishop, and was scourged by the monks in token of penitence.

In the subsequent part of his reign, however, Henry filled the Sees with the high officials of his government, and quietly made good most of the claims which had been put forth in the Constitutions of Clarendon.

The great ecclesiastical event of the reign of **Richard I.** was the brilliant episode of the **second Crusade**. Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the states-

men of Henry II., administered the kingdom in his absence. One minor incident, which, however, affected every parish, was the seizure of all the church plate of the kingdom to make up the ransom of the captive king.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PAPAL SUPREMACY

THE earlier years of John's reign were controlled by the regular government of the great officers of State organised by Henry II. and consolidated by the ten years' absence of Richard, at the head of which was Archbishop Hubert Walter, who had been the virtual viceroy of the absent king.

On the death of Archbishop Hubert in 1205 A.D., some of the younger monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, anxious to assert the right of free election by anticipating the king's *cong   d'  lire* and letter-missive, met on the very night of the archbishop's death, elected Reginald the sub-prior, enthroned him, and sent him off at once to Rome to obtain the Pope's confirmation before the matter should become known. But as soon as Reginald arrived in Flanders, his vanity led him to boast of his position, and the news soon came back to England. The king ignored the irregular proceeding and issued his *cong   d'  lire*, but to prevent objections, contented himself with intimating privately his wish for the election of John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, and Grey was elected without a contradictory voice; the party of Reginald, ashamed of his conduct, and possibly afraid of the consequences of their intrigue, concurring in the election. John also then sent twelve of the monks



to Rome to obtain the Pope's confirmation. But both parties had infringed the rights of the bishops of the province by neglecting to secure their assent, and the bishops also sent an agent to Rome to represent their grievance.

Innocent III., the greatest of all the Popes, was then the occupant of the Roman See. The disinterested zeal of earlier Popes to rescue the presentation to bishoprics out of the hands of princes had taken the ambitious turn of seeking to obtain the right of nomination for the Papacy, and Innocent embraced this opportunity of interference in the disposal of the greatest dignity of the English Church. He pronounced that the election of Reginald was irregular and invalid, but that it ought to have been declared invalid by the Roman court before the second election was proceeded with, and on that ground he declared that the election of De Grey was also uncanonical. Then, instead of leaving a new election to take place in due course, he summoned to his presence the monks of Christ Church who had been sent to Rome about the business, and bade them proceed to a new election in his presence, and to elect Stephen Langton. He put aside all their representations as to their incompetence; when they pleaded that they had taken an oath not to accept any but De Grey, he absolved them from their oath; finally, he threatened to excommunicate them if they refused to obey him, and so coerced them into compliance; they elected, and **the Pope consecrated, Stephen Langton as Archbishop** (June 1207). It is only doing justice to the Pope and to Langton to say that the Pope was not putting forward an unworthy creature of his own, for Langton was an Englishman of the highest character and reputation. The Pope was practically enforcing the

doctrine that the Archbishopric of Canterbury ought to be occupied by a prelate chosen by the Church in the interests of religion, and not given by the king as the payment of his minister. But the Pope's nomination was an innovation, an invasion of the rights and dignity of the English crown and Church, and not to be submitted to.

The king was enraged ; he drove the monks of Christ Church out of the kingdom, wrote to the Pope insisting upon his confirmation of Grey's election, and declared that Langton should never set foot in the kingdom. Innocent made some concession, pressing the king to accept Langton, but promising that the present transaction should not be drawn into a precedent ; but the king refused to yield, and the Pope proceeded to use the weapons with which the superstitions of the time supplied him ; in order to coerce the king, he put the nation under *interdict* (1208 A.D.).

The effect of this sentence was to deprive the people of the ordinary ministrations of the Church ; the clergy were permitted to baptize the newly born and to administer the last sacraments to the dying, but the churches were closed and all regular services suspended, and the people were required to observe the discipline of Lent ; the land lay under the ban of the Church for the wickedness of its king.

Two bishops in the king's interest, Peter des Roches, the Poitevin Bishop of Winchester, and John de Grey of Norwich, disregarded the interdict, while the other bishops left the kingdom ; the clergy generally obeyed the sentence, except those of Winchester and Norwich, and a few scattered parishes elsewhere. The Cistercian monasteries, which had the privilege of exemption from a general sentence of interdict, continued their services,

but with closed doors. John retaliated by seizing the property of the bishops and clergy who obeyed the interdict and threatened to banish them, and he commanded the monks to keep within their cloisters. Shortly, however, he allowed the clergy a scanty maintenance out of their estates and confiscated the rest of their income.

Finding that the misery of the kingdom did not subdue the king's resistance, the Pope proceeded, in 1209 A.D., to **excommunicate the king**. The effect of this sentence was to cut off the subject of it from the Church, and to cause all Christians to avoid intercourse with him. But neither did this reduce the king to obedience; and in 1211 the Pope proceeded to issue a **bull of deposition** against John, and to charge King Philip of France to execute the sentence, with succession to the forfeited throne. Philip began to muster forces for the invasion of England; John wrung money out of the Jews and the abbeys and raised an army; but he could not trust it, for he had incurred the hatred of all classes of his subjects, and stood in fear of deposition and death.

But John was not without a certain kind of statesmanship, and he extricated himself from his dangerous position at a stroke by making friends with his greatest enemy. In 1213 he made entire **submission to the Pope**, swore to admit Langton as archbishop, to restore their rights to the banished, to give back the money wrongfully exacted, and over and above all this to surrender his crown to the Pope and receive it back as the Pope's liegeman, and pay him a tribute of a thousand marks a year.

The archbishop thus forced upon the Church and nation turned out to be a model prelate, and played

a part which has made his one of the great names in our history. He was an Englishman by birth, holding a prebend in the cathedral church of York, though he had long been absent from his native country. A man of piety, learning, and ability, he had lately been the head of the University of Paris, then the greatest theological school of Europe. There he had been the intimate friend of Innocent; and when Innocent was elected to the Papal See, he had invited Langton to Rome, placed him in high office, and had lately made him a cardinal. In nominating him to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Innocent seems to have chosen a man whose character would justify the Pope's high-handed interposition and compel all men to recognise the difference between the man the Pope had chosen as archbishop and the serviceable creature whom the king would have put into that position in order to paralyse the opposition of the Church to the royal tyranny.

The course of events very soon gave Langton opportunity to show the nation what manner of man he was. When the king sought to take advantage of his recovered authority to raise the national forces to wage war for the recovery of Anjou and Normandy, his barons refused to follow him on the ground that they had already fulfilled the obligation of their feudal service. John would have waged war against his barons, but the archbishop threatened with excommunication every one who took up arms against them in an unjust civil strife. Some of them consented to aid the king, but the expedition was unsuccessful. On his return, the king sought revenge upon all who had remained at home by demanding an exorbitant scutage from them. The barons met at Bury St. Edmunds, and resolved upon armed resistance. The king tried to detach the Church

from the movement by promising freedom of election to sees and abbacies; he persuaded the Pope to threaten the barons with excommunication, and he brought over a large force of foreign mercenary soldiers. The archbishop put himself at the head of the national movement. He prevented the Pope's sentence of excommunication; he put the demands of the barons in writing; on John's refusal to grant them, armed forces were collected, under the title of "the army of God and Holy Church," to force their acceptance upon the king. London admitted the barons' army within its walls; the trading classes united with the barons and the Church in the national movement. John was deserted by all but the great officials of the government and a few of the barons especially connected with the royal family, who sought to save it from ruin. John found himself compelled to swear to and sign the **Great Charter** at Runnimede (15th June 1215), with the secret determination to repudiate his oath and signature at the first opportunity. The first clause of the charter declared that the Church was to be free, its privileges to be respected, and its right to free elections not to be infringed. The remaining clauses guarded the freedom and rights not only of the barons, but of the commonalty. All classes were secured against arbitrary power; the king was only to demand supplies with the consent of the Great Council; no man was to be proceeded against except by the judgment of his peers or the law of the land; the king was to dismiss his mercenary troops; and a council of twenty-five was appointed to watch over the fulfilment of the conditions of the charter. In form the Great Charter was a royal grant, in fact it was a treaty between the king and his people.

John, relieved from the immediate pressure of force,

at once took steps to break the treaty. The Pope protected his vassal by declaring the barons to be rebels and releasing the king from his oath. John, instead of dismissing his mercenaries, hired large reinforcements. The barons mustered their forces and were defeated by John's mercenaries. Then the barons took the extreme step of inviting the French king to their aid, offering the crown to Louis the Dauphin. The Pope excommunicated Louis and placed London under interdict, but the Londoners took no heed of the Pope's fulminations. In the midst of the civil war John died (1216), and his death opened a door for the reconciliation of the crown with the people. The eldest son of John was only nine years old at his father's death, but he was at once recognised as king by his father's friends. Louis and the barons who adhered to him were defeated at Lincoln, and the nation rallied to the side of the young king. The Great Charter was renewed, and the government was placed in the hands of a Regency.

The Papal power reached its climax in England in the reign of Henry III. During the minority of the king the Papal legate—first Gualo and then Pandulph—was one of his guardians, and William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, was the other; and these two, with Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar, formed the Regency. In 1227 Henry declared himself of age (he was twenty years old), and put the Poitevin Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester, at the head of affairs. The king was amiable and accomplished, but feeble and vacillating, and always in the hands of foreign favourites, on whom he lavished offices, honours, and estates. Partly in recognition of the relation in which his father had placed the kingdom and the Papal See, partly because he needed the support of the Pope against his own nobles, Henry allowed the

Pope to make great inroads upon the rights and liberties of the Church of England. The Popes had recently started the theory that, as sovereigns of the Church, all church benefices were rightly at their disposal, in entire disregard of the rights of patrons, and that all the clergy were their subjects. They used to issue mandates requiring a bishop to find a benefice for the person recommended; they nominated persons to the reversion of particular benefices by what were called "letters of provision." They carried these pretensions to a great extent in England. Foreigners were intruded into the best benefices. In 1240 the legate obtained a promise from the king to present 300 Italian priests to benefices before he presented a single Englishman. Mansel, the king's chaplain, was said to hold 700 church benefices at the same time. On one occasion three strangers walked into York Minster and proceeded to the choir, where two of them installed the third as Dean, acting under the authority of a Papal bull; when the archbishop refused to recognise the appointment, he was excommunicated and an interdict was laid on the diocese. Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, was suspended for refusing to institute a foreigner into a benefice; which did not prevent him at a later period from writing a famous letter to the Pope, refusing to obey a letter of provision, and remonstrating with him on the wickedness of his policy.

On the theory that the benefices were at the Pope's disposal, the Popes demanded a regular revenue from them; a twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues whatever, a third of such as exceeded 100 marks, a half of such as were possessed by non-residents, and the entire revenues of all benefices during their vacancy. Moreover, the Popes assumed the right to demand extraordinary taxes and

aids from the clergy as other sovereigns did from their subjects. Thus in 1229 the Pope demanded and obtained a tenth of all ecclesiastical benefices; in 1240 the legate Otho dealt with the bishops and abbots individually, demanding benevolences to aid the Pope in his war with the Emperor, and it was said carried more money out of the kingdom than remained in it. In 1244 again an agent of the Pope, Martin by name, repeated these exactions with equal success. In 1256, for the first time, Pope Alexander IV. demanded a grant of **the first-fruits** of new incumbents for five years, and first-fruits soon became established as a regular part of the Papal revenue from the country.

The popular indignation showed itself in the formation of secret associations in many places up and down the country, which organised a **violent opposition to the Italian clergy**, wasted their fields, emptied their barns and gave the contents to the poor, and insulted their persons; it was rumoured that these proceedings were encouraged by people in high positions.

When Innocent IV. summoned a Council at Lyons (1255 A.D.) to excommunicate the Emperor Frederick, the English king and nobility sent representatives to complain before the council of the avarice of the Roman Church. They represented, among many other grievances, that the **benefices held by Italian clergy in England** had been estimated, and found to amount to 60,000 marks a year, a sum which exceeded the revenue of the crown. When mention was made before the council of the feudal subjection of England to the See of Rome, Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, and the other English agents, **challenged the claim**, and insisted that John had no right or power, without the consent of the barons, to subject the kingdom to any such servitude.



At length **Simon de Montfort**, Earl of Leicester, the king's brother-in-law, put himself at the head of a movement of resistance against the manifold abuses of the government. The Church again, as in the time of John, put itself in the forefront in defence of the national liberties and rights. Edmund Rich, the saintly Archbishop of Canterbury, did not shrink from the political action which his place as the foremost subject of the realm demanded of him. Grosseteste, the learned and ascetic Bishop of Lincoln, the personal friend and adviser of De Montfort, took an active part in the constitutional opposition to both king and Pope. In 1258 the barons, summoned to a Parliament at Westminster, appeared in arms and demanded the expulsion of foreigners and the establishment of a committee of twenty-four to reform the realm. When the king violated the conditions, the barons were joined by the citizens in arms. The king and his supporters were defeated at Lewes (1264 A.D.) and a regency appointed. In the following year the barons were defeated in turn at Evesham. In a Parliament in 1267 a statute was enacted which granted most of the reforms demanded. Henry allowed his son Edward to be the real head of the government, and the country entered upon a new era.

The combined resistance of the barons, the Church, and the citizens during this and the previous reigns helped to weld England into a nation and a national Church, jealous of foreign influences in Church and State. Edward sympathised with the national aspirations, and set himself to embody them in permanent institutions. From his accession to the throne in 1272 we may date the beginning of the recovery of the liberties of the English Church from the usurpations of the Roman See.

Beneath the political troubles of the reigns of John and Henry III., which lie on the surface of the history of the country, and specially attract the attention of the student, there was going on an immense **movement and growth of the national life**. The political troubles were indeed one of its symptoms; they were the outward phenomena of the struggle of the nation to secure its liberties and rights by effectual constitutional guarantees. The barons of the Norman Conquest had been largely replaced by a new race of nobles sprung from the great ministerial families; the secular clergy were recovering from the injury done to their revenues and their spiritual influence by the popularity of the monastic institution; the middle class was rising into wealth and importance; the tyranny of John and the faults of Henry's reign had stirred up the people to resistance, and had helped to weld all ranks and classes, nobles, clergy, and commons, into a united people. It was the nation which rose in arms against John and Henry, and wrested from them the principles of constitutional government. Edward recognised these principles as right, and organised Parliament, and initiated the system of legislation which has continued ever since.

The architectural monuments afford a striking illustration of the character of the time. The Normans were great builders, and filled the land with castles, cathedrals, and abbeys; but the **architectural activity of the thirteenth century** exceeded that of any other previous century in history.<sup>1</sup>

There were no castles built in it, and very few monasteries. On the other hand, nearly all the cathedrals, so lately built, were added to or partly rebuilt on a

<sup>1</sup> Fergusson, "History of Architecture."

grander scale; numerous churches were built in the towns and all over the country. It was the great age of the growth of civic institutions, and the cathedrals and churches are a symptom of the gradual recovery by the parochial clergy of their position as the active ministers of religion among the people.

A less tangible but very important indication of the spirit of the time is afforded by the style of these new buildings. The appearance of a **new style in art** is a very rare phenomenon, and the certain indication of the rising of an exceptional intellectual vigour expressing new ideas and new conditions of life. The new style of architecture used in the great buildings of the period which almost coincides with the reigns of John and Henry III., introduced new constructive principles; new ideas of design, in its ground-plan which everywhere replaced the short round-ended apse with a long square-ended chancel, in length of perspective and soaring height; new conceptions of beauty, in its pointed arches, in the elaborate light and shade of its moulded pillars and arches, and in its sculptured foliage of strong leafage slowly unfolding with the vigour of the life of spring. It is remarkable that while nearly every cathedral was enlarged, notwithstanding the building fury of the time and the attraction of a new style, the early English builders recognised the grandeur of the Norman work, and retained much of it. Salisbury is the only entirely Early-Pointed cathedral, and that was the natural consequence of the removal of the cathedral city from the picturesque but too limited site afforded by the venerable mound of Old Sarum to a new site in the adjoining meadows by the river-side. Salisbury was early in the style; the presbytery of Lincoln Cathedral may serve as an example of its complete development, and there is

perhaps nothing in the history of architecture more remarkable in its combination of engineering skill, noble architectural design, and beauty of detail.

It may be well to explain the statement above that the secular clergy were recovering from the injury done to their revenues and influence by the monastic institution, and a note on the **foundation of vicarages** will afford the explanation. This was the correction of an abuse which had grown up in the previous century. The Norman founders of the new monasteries had very largely adopted the custom of endowing their monasteries with the rectories in their patronage ; no doubt, in the belief that the monks would make better provision for the spiritual welfare of the parishioners than the secular rectors, and that the surplus revenues would be better employed in the service of religion in the hands of these great religious institutions. But it was found after a while that the monasteries considered that they fulfilled their obligations by sending a clerk to conduct divine service and do the necessary routine spiritual work, or by putting a priest in charge of the parish at a small stipend. The bishops raised a protest against this state of things, and obtained authority to insist that a proper provision should be made in "appropriate" parishes (*i.e.*, parishes of which the religious houses were rectors) for the maintenance of a permanent parish priest, a vicar, a representative of the rector. The usual provision was a house and portion of glebe, the small tithes, and the fees and offerings. It is a very important indication of the revival of the influence of the secular clergy that in the course of the century this re-settlement of the appropriate parishes was very generally secured.

The thirteenth century was also the great age of the

**Friars.** The central idea of the institution of the Friars was different from that of the monks. The idea of monachism was seclusion from the world with a view to the cultivation of the spiritual life of the individual; that of the new institution was the abandonment of the world for the sake of entire devotion to religious and charitable ministrations to others. **Dominic** founded an order of Preaching Brothers to combat ignorance and heresy; **Francis** an order of men to minister to the poor and sick and afflicted. Both orders had the same organisation: a general of the order in Rome, provincials ruling the order in the various countries, wardens over the districts into which the country was divided, and a head of each house. Both adopted the principle that the order should possess no property, but should live by the alms of the people. The Friars multiplied rapidly, spread over Europe, and effected a great religious revival, which may be compared with that produced by the labours of Wesley and Whitfield at a later date. There were two other orders, the **Carmelite** and **Augustinian**, which were less numerous and important. Houses of Friars were founded in the suburbs of most of the great towns of England. The Friars cultivated learning with such success that their teachers became famous in all the universities of Europe; and for two centuries played a great part in the religious life of the times.

The thirteenth century was the great age of the **Schoolmen**. Their system was based upon the philosophy of Aristotle, and sought to prove the truth of Christian doctrine by the syllogistic method of reasoning. Alexander Hales, an Englishman, was the leader of the schoolmen (died 1245). Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican friar (died 1274), the author of the *Summa Theologica*, the greatest of the works of its day, and of the *Catena Aurea* and

other works, was assigned the next place as a theologian after the four great doctors of the West ; and Bonaventura, a Franciscan, the eighth place. Roger Bacon, an English Franciscan friar (died 1292), was the father of physical science. John Duns Scotus, an Englishman (died 1308), was the great theologian of the Franciscan order.

## CHAPTER XII

### *THE REACTION AGAINST ROME*

THE Papal pretensions reached their greatest height in the time of Boniface VIII. (1294-1303), but the Papal power had already begun to decline. The authority of the Roman See had originally grown up on the sympathy felt by the churches and peoples of Europe with the endeavour of a succession of Popes to control the arbitrary acts of princes. But when Hildebrand's grand idea of a supreme spiritual authority which was to regulate the religious affairs of Christendom had degenerated into an endeavour to make the Papacy a feudal sovereignty, with the clergy as its ministers and with church property as its domain, both clergy and people began to murmur at the usurpation. Very shortly the worldly ambitions which the Papacy developed, the abuses which the Popes introduced, the rapacity with which they seized upon the revenues of the churches and spent them upon personal objects, and the scandalous use of spiritual censures (excommunications and interdicts) in support of temporal quarrels, alienated the popular sympathy, and taught all men that **Popes were no more to be trusted with arbitrary power than princes.** Towards the close of the thirteenth century, princes were able to defy the pretensions of Popes to exercise any control over them; and the national churches, supported by the princes, were

able to assert their liberties against the claim of the See to treat them as subject provinces of an Italian ecclesiastical empire. Boniface was the last of the Popes who exercised authority over the temporal jurisdiction of princes. With the decline of the power of Henry III. the exercise of Papal authority over the crown of England came to an end.<sup>1</sup> Simon de Montfort had set the example of a peremptory resistance to the Roman claims; Edward took up the policy of a firm constitutional maintenance of the rights of the crown and the national Church as against the Pope, and the rights of the crown as against the national Church. When Boniface, after the battle of Falkirk in 1300, intervened at the request of the Scots, and exhorted Edward to desist from his attempts to conquer Scotland, quoting evidence of its ancient independence of England, and claiming to be himself its liege lord, the king brought the matter before a Parliament at London; that body, after answering the Pope's arguments, concluded by saying, that while they had justified their cause before him, they did not receive him for their judge; the crown of England was free and sovereign; they had sworn to maintain all its royal prerogatives, and would never permit the king himself, even were he willing, to relinquish its independence.

Throughout the fourteenth century the resistance to Rome was steadily kept up, and its encroachments were gradually thrust back, almost to the limits which the Conqueror had originally assigned to the Papal intervention in the affairs of England. In 1321, in the reign of Edward II., a statute was passed forbidding in general terms the appealing to foreign courts for pleas which might be determined at home, an indirect blow

<sup>1</sup> No legates were admitted into England after his reign.



at appeals to Rome. In the Parliament of 17 Ed. III., 1344 A.D., the Commons petitioned the king and nobles to find some remedy for the Papal abuses, "for that they neither could nor would any longer bear these strange oppressions, or else to help them to expel the Pope's power out of the realm by force." The king issued a proclamation against **Provisors**, but it did not put a stop to them. In 1351 a **Statute of Provisors** was passed, which made it penal to procure any presentation to benefices from the court of Rome, and effectually secured the rights of patrons. From the time that Edward III. attained his majority he ceased for forty years to pay the annual tribute of 1000 marks which King John had engaged for himself and his successors to pay; and when the Pope threatened to summon him to Rome to answer for his default, the king laid the matter before Parliament (1367 A.D.), which unanimously replied that John had no power to bring the kingdom under such servitude and subjection without the consent of Parliament; that if the Pope should attempt anything against the king, the king and all his subjects would resist with all their force and power. In 1376 the Parliament of the Jubilee year of Edward III.'s reign drew up and sent to the Pope a bitter complaint of the injuries which the kingdom suffered at the hands of the Papal court, and declared that the Pope's innovations, usurpations, and provisors were the cause of all the plagues, injuries, famine, and poverty of the realm; were more destructive to it than all the wars; that the taxes levied by the Pope exceeded five times those paid to the king; that everything was venal in that sinful city of Rome, and that English lay patrons had learned simony and covetousness of the Pope.

Though this may be exaggerated language, it indicates

the bitter feeling of the nation against the Papal "innovations and usurpations;" and the frequency of the allusions to them shows the persistency of the feeling. The index to Cotton's Abridgment of the Tower Records gives sixty-two such references from 18 Edward III. to 39 Henry VI.

The **Statute of Mortmain** checked the further acquisition of landed property by the Church without the royal assent. In 1353 the **Statute of Premunire**, which forbade any Papal bulls to be introduced into England without the royal assent, under pain of outlawry, confiscation, and banishment, effectually curbed the interference of Rome.

The minority of Richard II., the feebleness of his rule, and the usurped sovereignty of Henry IV., gave opportunity for the formation of political parties and the growth of constitutional government. The Royal Council corresponded to some extent to a modern Cabinet. Parliament exercised a certain control over the Council. The party of the barons striving to maintain their feudal privileges against the crown, and jealous of the power of the Church, allied itself with the anti-Church feeling which was rising among the people. The number of men of noble family in the Episcopate, and the great part which they took in politics, is a remarkable feature of the time.

In 1371, Parliament, during a temporary political success of the Baronial party, aimed a blow at the Church party by declaring **prelates unfit to hold offices of State**. William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, who was chancellor, and others, were in consequence dismissed for a short time; it was the only period from the Saxon conversion to the seventeenth century that some of the principal offices of State were not held by clerics.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *THE LOLLARDS*

THE Continental nations had been troubled since the beginning of the eleventh century by heresies mixed up with political opinions subversive of all order in Church and State, held by organised bodies of men ready to break out into open rebellion. The Cathari in Italy and France at the close of the twelfth century, and the Waldenses and Albigenses in the early part of the thirteenth, had caused great popular commotions. This sporadic fanaticism broke out in England in the fourteenth century under the name of **Lollardism**. Among the doctrines which the Lollards maintained and taught were such fanatical extravagances as these: that the Church is the synagogue of Satan, and that its baptism put a child in a worse condition than before; they denied the necessity for episcopal ordination, and ordained ministers for themselves, maintaining that every Christian man and woman, being without sin, is entitled to consecrate the Eucharist; they maintained that cohabitation by mutual consent constituted a lawful marriage without the forms of the Church; that all ought to marry, or to have an intention to marry, if they desired to be saved, for otherwise they are guilty of murder by preventing the holy posterity which should people the New Jerusalem; they held that neither the Lord's day nor any other of the Church's

festivals should be kept holy. With these religious extravagances were combined opinions on civil government which, if carried out, would have ended in anarchy; as that all authorities in Church and State hold their authority on the tenure of grace, so that if they fall from grace they forfeit their title to be obeyed; this left it open to any one who chose to fancy that his superior had "fallen from grace" to refuse any longer to obey him, child to obey parent, servant master, subject sovereign, Christian his priest or bishop.

The general discontent with arbitrary rule and with the manifold corruptions of the Church led many to extend a general sympathy and countenance to the Lollards who were far from holding their extreme views. The party of the nobles sought the political support of this widespread feeling by the expression of a general sympathy with the new reformers.

The most remarkable for twenty years among the leaders of these new opinions was **John Wiclif**, a Cambridge divine of considerable reputation for ability and learning. About 1369 he published a work *De Dominio Divino*, which contained the doctrine that "dominion depends on grace," noticed above. He denounced the Pope as Anti-Christ, attacked the wealth and pomp of the prelates, the claims of the clergy to exemption from secular jurisdiction, their ignorance, self-indulgence, and neglect of preaching. He advocated the resumption by the temporal lords of the church endowments, which were abused. And all this he did not only in learned volumes in Latin, but by circulating among the middle class tracts written in a popular and striking style in vigorous English.

He adopted another mode of spreading his opinions by the agency of a kind of order of itinerant preachers. He sought out suitable men, whom he taught and trained

so far as to enable them to preach the great truths of religion, and the peculiar views which he himself held, in a homely and popular style. His "**Poor Priests**" seem at first to have been ordained men. He provided in some way for their maintenance, and forbade them to imitate the mendicancy of the Friars. He sent them forth clad in a long russet robe, with staff in hand and a copy of the Gospels at their girdle, to teach and preach through town and country, as the avowed rivals and opponents of the Friars. They were never numerous, and did not long continue their work, being condemned and silenced by the London Council of 1382 A.D. It was a very interesting experiment, worthy of study in these days when we are trying to organise new missionary agencies.

His greatest work, which largely occupied the later years of his life, and has kept his name in honourable memory, was his **translation of the Bible** from the Vulgate into English. It is a popular error that the Bible was previously a sealed book. In earlier times those who could read at all could read Latin, it was the common tongue of all learning, and the Vulgate was accessible to them. Portions of the Bible most useful for popular edification, Gospels, Psalms, abridgments of the Bible history, had been translated into English centuries before. English was just now becoming a literary language. Poets like Langland, Gower, and Chaucer were writing in it. In 1362 it was substituted for French in the law courts, and the king's opening speech to Parliament was delivered in English. In short, the time had come for a translation of the Bible, and Wiclif has the merit of having been, with the aid of collaborators, the first to accomplish the great work.

In the reign of Henry IV. the Lollards continued to

give great cause for anxiety to the government. They were very numerous among the people, and were strongly represented in the House of Commons. In order to overawe them, an Act *de heretico comburendo*—for the burning of heretics—was passed in 1400–1 A.D., and Sawtree, a London priest, who was one of their most conspicuous leaders, was condemned and executed under it the following year. In 1404 A.D., in answer to a demand for supplies for the prosecution of the French war, the Commons proposed to the king to confiscate the revenues of the Church, which were sufficient, they alleged, to support 15 earls, 1500 knights, 6200 esquires, to maintain 100 hospitals, and to leave a handsome sum to the king's exchequer. It was said that 100,000 Lollards were ready to rise in insurrection. Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who was regarded as their leader, tried in 1415 A.D. to excite a rebellion, and being captured, was executed under the recent Act *de heretico*, in 1417. Whether he is to be regarded as a traitor or as a martyr was and is still disputed. "Perhaps we shall most safely conclude from the tenor of history that his doctrinal creed was far sounder than the principles which guided either his moral or his political conduct."<sup>1</sup>

The French wars, reopened by Henry V., and after his reign the Wars of the Roses, absorbed the national interest; the doctrines of Lollardism lingered among the people, but the power of the Lollards as a political party vanished away.

In the fourteenth century the kingdom advanced rapidly in wealth and in luxury. Art developed from the vigorous but severe Early English style into the

<sup>1</sup> Const. Hist. of England, iii. 87, Bishop (Stubbs) of Oxford.

elegant luxuriance of the Decorated. Many of the cathedrals were added to, and many churches built in a style which is easily recognised by the flowing tracery of its windows, the geometrical outline of its mouldings, and the luxuriance of its sculptured foliage, in which the stiff acanthus foliage of the thirteenth century has unfolded into summer leafage of all kinds copied from nature. A school of sculpture had arisen which gave the human figure with a certain conventionality of manner, but with a creditable knowledge of anatomy, elegance of pose, skilful drapery, and force and beauty in the heads.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *THE REFORMING COUNCILS*

IN the fifteenth century there was a great absence of original thought and of religious zeal. Its most marked feature, perhaps, was the growing impatience under the prevalence of ecclesiastical abuses—there was not much question about doctrines—and the great events of ecclesiastical history are the attempts to obtain a general reform of them, at the three Councils of Pisa (1409), Constance (1414), and Basle (1431).

The **Council of Pisa** was summoned to deliver the Church from the schism and scandal occasioned by the existence of the two rival lines of Popes, which had existed since 1378, one seated at Rome, the other at Avignon, one supported by about one half of Europe, the other by the other half. The Council deposed both Popes and elected a third; but the deposed Popes continued their pretensions and still found supporters; so that the result of the action of the Council was to add a third line of Popes, and all three continued till 1414. In 1410 the third Pope (Alexander V.) died, and his successor, John XXIII., reluctantly summoned another Council to meet at Constance.

The **Council of Constance** had been carefully planned, so as to be independent of Roman influences; it was to meet out of Italy; as many learned doctors as prelates



were summoned; the Emperor presided over it; and it voted by nations, so as to neutralise the disproportionate number of Italian Monsignori. The first act of the Council was to depose all the Popes and make a clear field. But instead of proceeding at once to settle reforms, as the English and German nations desired, the Council made the blunder of conceding to the Italian wish to give precedence to the election of a Pope. The new Pope, Martin V., acted as had been anticipated. He used all his power and influence to evade any real reformation; played off the nations one against another; made separate concordats with them, and concluded the Council as soon as possible. One thing, however, the Council did which is of permanent importance—it passed a unanimous decree, to which Pope Martin gave his adhesion, that a Council is above the Pope: “Every lawfully convoked Œcumenical Council representing the Church derives its authority immediately from Christ; and every one, the Pope included, is subject to it in matters of faith, in the healing of schism, and in the reformation of the Church.” The legates of Eugenius IV. (the successor of Martin) also swore to this decree before they were admitted to preside in his name over the next Council at Basle.

The **Council of Basle** sat for three and a half years, and drew up schemes of reform, but at the end of that time it split in two. Part of it met under the Pope at Ferrara, the remainder refused to remove, and continued its sittings at Basle; and the Council came to nothing.

On this failure the Christian sovereigns took the question of reform into their own hands. The King of France summoned a great assembly of the nobility, clergy, and others, which agreed to continue to recognise the Pope, but to put in force the reforming decrees

of the late Council. Thus originated what is known as the **Pragmatic Sanction** of Bourges, the charter of the Gallican liberties. The Emperor of Germany and the Imperial Diet took a very similar course. But the Popes astutely negotiated with the sovereigns separately, and before very long regained many of the advantages which they had lost. On the whole, the Church relapsed into its old condition. In Rome especially, from 1464 to 1503, a succession of Popes—Paul II., Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI.—shocked Christendom by the scandal of their vicious lives.

The **style of architecture** in the fifteenth century was in its main features the same as in the fourteenth, but with some alterations in the proportions of the buildings and in the ornamental details. The architects seem to have aimed at producing a light, spacious, unencumbered interior; the columns are sometimes very thin, the windows are large, and, when filled with painted glass, were the principal decoration; the flowing tracery of the previous style is abandoned, and rigid perpendicular mullions divide the window from top to bottom, the upper part being again subdivided into arched compartments, all finished with arched and cusped heads. The prevalence of strong vertical lines gives the style its distinctive name of **Perpendicular**. In later examples the roofs are often of low pitch, elaborately framed, richly moulded and carved, and covered with lead; where the roofs are groined, it is often with fan-tracery. The arches are comparatively low and often four-centred, the mouldings broad and shallow. It is the age of noble towers.

## CHAPTER XV

### *A SUMMARY OF THE MEDIÆVAL PERIOD*

WE have seen how much the Church had done to form and mould our national life. It gave to our rude English forefathers not only the inestimable blessing of Christianity, but it also introduced among them the law, literature, art, and arts of life, of a more advanced social condition. In a word, it trained them up into Christian civilisation. It prepared the way for the union of the Heptarchic principdoms into the kingdom of England. The Church grew and prospered with the growth and prosperity of the nation, and was an important factor in that growth. In ages of arbitrary kings and unlettered barons, the Church took the place of a cultured middle class, and it was the national champion of the commonalty. Throughout the Middle Ages the Church still supplied the nation with its ministers of State, ambassadors, and judges ; its schools and universities ; its lawyers, physicians, men of science ; its philosophers, historians, and poets ; its systematic relief of the poor, its hospitals for the sick, its alms-houses for the helpless. The Church was among the foremost in those national movements which wrung the principles of constitutional government from the crown, and alone in defending the poor from oppression, and demanding for them the consideration due to a common

brotherhood in Christ Jesus. The Church was the only ladder by which the poor man of natural ability might rise to be the equal of princes.

The organisation of the Church in Saxon times had been modelled on the actual civil condition of the people. Each of the Heptarchic kingdoms formed a diocese, and when the dioceses were subdivided, the partition followed the lines of the great tribal subdivisions; the rectories were the estates of the landlords, or the townships of the freeholders, and when the manors were subdivided, as population increased and waste lands were brought into cultivation, new manors became new parishes. The formation of parishes was probably complete by the time of the Conquest, at which epoch there were about twenty dioceses, including the Welsh Sees, and about 8000 parishes. The wisdom of these primitive arrangements is shown by the fact that they lasted without change through all the political, ecclesiastical, and social revolutions of about a thousand years.

The constructive work of the ages, from the Conquest to the Reformation, was the addition of supplementary agencies. The number of the **monastic houses** was greatly increased by the Normans of the Conquest. It was the fashion of that time for a great noble to found a monastery, usually in some wild remote district of his new possessions, just as in earlier times it was the custom for the Saxon Thane to build a church on his manor. The earlier monasteries were religious colonies scattered over the country, which helped largely in civilising and christianising it. The wealth of the monasteries grew not so much from subsequent donations—pious benevolence soon turned into other channels—as from the agricultural skill of the monks in cultivating the wild districts originally bestowed upon them. In the three later

centuries of their existence, they were religious corporations learned, wealthy and powerful, who acted as a counterpoise to the power of the secular barons, and helped largely to maintain learning and culture, and the dignity and influence of religion.

The **Friars** were a considerable, and probably on the whole a valuable, addition to the former agencies. Nearly all the great towns of mediæval England had one or more convents of Friars. The Dominicans often built a large church, specially arranged for preaching, and attracted large congregations; the Franciscans ministered especially to the poor and afflicted. The Friars went on circuit also, by two and two, at regular intervals round the neighbouring villages, preaching in the village churches or churchyards, and visiting the people of all classes. The two great faults in their constitution were (1) their independence of Episcopal control, which left the Friars to be the rivals of the parish priests, instead of a co-ordinated agency; and (2) their dependence for maintenance on the alms of the people to whom they ministered, which drove them to practise the arts of popularity-hunting, by which a man loses both self-respect and the respect of those whose favour he courts.

To complete the view of the ecclesiastical machinery of the country districts, there must be added a number of **free chapels** intended for the use of groups of population at a distance from the parish churches. It is probable that these were technically chantry chapels. There were great legal difficulties in the way of the building of a new parish church, and there is hardly an instance of it for centuries, but nothing more than the bishop's license was needed for the building of a chantry chapel; and under this name not only hamlet chapels,

but chapels of ease for important new groups of population were easily provided.

A remarkable feature of the mediæval ecclesiastical organisation was the **great number of the parishes into which the towns were divided**, each with its more or less large and handsome parish church. This is illustrated by all and each of our old towns, from London to York, from Norwich to Bristol. Each of them to the approaching traveller in those days presented a picturesque architectural group of walls and gates rising out of the green meadows which grew up to the edge of the moat, and, rising above the walls, a grove of towers and spires. Colchester, for example, had its 108 acres within the old Roman walls divided into eight parishes, and for the whole population of about 2000 souls within the borough and liberties there were by the early part of the fourteenth century no less than sixteen churches and parish priests provided. Besides there were within the walls the castle chapel, a Franciscan friary, a hospital worked by Crichted friars, and a leper hospital, a guild chapel, and ten chantries distributed among the churches; just outside the walls a great Benedictine abbey, an Augustinian priory with a great church adjoining the south gate, and a hermitage and chapel at a little distance out of the town.

Every great castle had its chapel and its **chaplains**. Some of the great nobles had a considerable chapel establishment of dean and chaplains and singing men and boys, of which St. George's Chapel, Windsor, is almost the only one remaining; and after the example of the royal chapel the nobleman's chaplains assisted in the administration of such of the lord's business as required clerkly attainments. Later, every great manor-house had its chapel, where the household attended for

daily prayers, and a chaplain who ministered to them; only they all went to the parish church on certain great festivals. By the close of the fifteenth century, knights and gentlemen, and even wealthy yeomen and traders, had their domestic chaplain.

About the beginning of the fifteenth century devotional munificence began to show itself in the foundation of **chantries** for one or more priests to say prayers daily for the welfare of the members, living and departed, of a particular family. The chantry chapel was usually formed within the existing church, *e.g.*, at the east end of an aisle parclosed off with traceried wooden screens, or was an addition to the existing church, and opened into it.

The **Guilds**, which were so universal in those ages, were all organised on a religious basis, and frequently had a chantry and a chantry priest to pray for the welfare of the members. By these means pious people endeavoured to remedy the discrepancy between the number of parish priests and the increasing number of parishioners under their charge, and to obtain greater and peculiar pastoral care, by engaging the services of a clergyman specially bound to them.

This **vast machinery** appears the more remarkable when it is **compared with the population of the country**. At the time of the Conquest the people numbered little more than two millions, and in the time of Henry VIII. they had not reached five millions. What was left of this ecclesiastical machinery by the spoliations of the Reformation period was made to do duty down to the beginning of the present century, when the population had grown to fourteen millions.

Under this great organisation, in the midst of the great events of Church history which have been re-

corded, what was the actual religious condition of the people?

The systematic religious instruction of the people was not neglected. If, in the depressed condition of the parochial clergy of the twelfth century, there was any slackness in teaching, there was certainly no lack of zeal on their part in the thirteenth century, and the new Orders of Friars both stimulated and supplemented the diligence of the parish priests. In 1281 A.D., Archbishop Peccham issued the celebrated Constitutions of the Synod of Oxford which are called by his name. The 10th canon says, "We order that every priest having the charge of a flock do four times in each year (*i.e.*, once each quarter), on one or more solemn feast-days, instruct the people in the vulgar tongue, simply and without any subtle distinctions, on the Creed, Ten Commandments, Evangelical Precepts, seven works of mercy, seven deadly sins with their offshoots, seven principal virtues, and seven sacraments," and sets forth in considerable detail the points on which the people are to be instructed. These Constitutions are referred to constantly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the foundation of the existing practice in the Church, and similar decrees were repeated in Diocesan Synods. Archbishop Thoresby of York, in 1357 A.D., commissioned a monk to draw out in English an exposition of the Creed, Commandments, seven deadly sins, &c., to be sent to each of his priests. Many manuals of the kind were published for the use of the clergy: the *Pars Occuli Sacerdotis*, c. 1350 A.D.; very like it the *Pupillus Occuli*, 1385 A.D.; the *Oculus Sacerdotis*; numerous MSS. of these still exist, and there were early printed editions. The *Speculum Christiani* of John Walton, fourteenth century, has the peculiarity of prefacing each division of the work with a rhyming motto



giving the chief points to be remembered. The book was Englished by John Bird, fifteenth century, and there are several printed editions of it.

There are numerous tracts on the art of **preaching** of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and courses of sermons for the use of preachers, as by Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, in the thirteenth, and Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh, in the fourteenth century; and by John Felton in the middle of the fifteenth century, fifty-eight in number, of which there are many MSS. The *Liber Festivalis*, a course of sermons for Sundays and holy-days, by John Mirk, is of about the same date. A *Liber Festivalis* founded upon Mirk's book was printed twice by each of the first great printers, Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, and Pynson. Preachers' helps were already known, as the *Summa Predicantium* of Friar J. Bromyard, about the beginning of the fifteenth century; a similar work by Alan of Lynn, a Carmelite Friar, and several other similar works. Concordances and subject indexes were multiplied in the beginning of the fourteenth century.

That instructions were actually given and sermons preached, was ascertained by the inquiries concerning every parish at the bishop's visitation; e.g., in the first fifteen years of the fourteenth century, in the register of Bishop Stapledon of Exeter.

The people must have been made familiar with the great facts of religion by their pictorial representation on church walls and windows and in block books, by miracle plays and popular customs, and in other ways.

In trying to estimate the moral condition of the people, it must not be forgotten that the Mediæval Church maintained a system of **discipline** which took account of men's regular observance of the external duties of religion,

and which visited scandalous vice with penalties. In times when men recognised its authority, respected its admonitions, and submitted to its corrections, the result must have been favourable to the well-being of the people. It went further than that; it cultivated confidential pastoral relations between the man who had the care of souls and the souls under his care which tended to growth in holiness. Church discipline is a by-word with us, but the effect of the paternal discipline of a wise father over his household may afford a standard by which it is possible to estimate the effect of the spiritual discipline of the earlier Church. On the whole, then, the number of clergymen engaged in pastoral ministration was very large; their ministrations were fairly efficient; and it is probable that a much larger proportion of the people knew the truths of religion, acknowledged its obligations, and made some endeavour to live accordingly, than at the present time.

There are a considerable number of **popular works on morals**, adapted to lead people to cure their faults and cultivate virtues. A French book on "Virtues and Vices," written in 1279, was translated in numerous versions, both poetical and prose, in the subsequent century; the *Ayenbite of Inwit* (Remorse of Conscience) and Richard of Hampole's *Prick of Conscience* represent it; Chaucer's "Poore Parson's Tale" is a free adaptation of portions of it, and his use of it helps to show the popularity of this kind of teaching. A considerable number of "Manuals of the Duties of a Parish Priest" existed, and indicate, just as the number of similar works published during the last half century do, that it was a time in which the parochial clergy were interested in their duties. One of these in English verse, probably of the first half of the fourteenth century, translated from a

Latin original by John Mirk, Canon of Lilleshall, published by the Early English Text Society, is a very sensible, and, for its time, useful book.

The disadvantage of the use of Latin in the services of the Church was not overlooked; books of private devotion, called **Prymers**, were extensively used, some partly in Latin, partly in English, others entirely in English. The earliest known Prymer entirely in English is of the date 1410. These Prymers contained translations of matins and evensong, the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, the Penitential Psalms, the Litany, and other devotions and prayers. The Epistles and Gospels at Mass were read in English, and there were little books which contained the Latin of that service with translations of portions of it, to help the devout to follow and join in the worship.

It is convenient to gather together here a brief summary of some of the chief **errors of the Mediæval Church** which were abandoned at the Reformation. **The Papal claims** are so involved in the history, that they have been dealt with already in various places (see pp. 74, 113-116).

**The Cultus of the Blessed Virgin Mary.**—The **assumption** of the Virgin Mary to heaven at her death is first found mentioned by Sophronius in the fifth century as a doubtful tradition. It was not till the twelfth century that some canons of Lyons, during a vacancy of the See, instituted a festival in honour of her **Conception**. St. Bernard wrote against it as a "novelty," an "error," and a "superstition," arguing that only our Blessed Lord was conceived without sin; but from that time the opinion of the Immaculate Conception began to be entertained. Duns Scotus in the fourteenth century

argued in favour of it as a scholastic proposition; Thomas Aquinas opposed it. Scotus was a Franciscan, Aquinas a Dominican; the two orders took up the controversy, and the whole Church was ranged on one side or the other. The Council of London in 1328 ordered the festival to be observed. Pope Pius IX. first declared the doctrine to be *de fide* in 1854 A.D. Throughout the thirteenth and following centuries an excessive veneration was paid to the Virgin, prayers were offered to her, she was regarded as the mediatrix between man and her Divine Son.

**Transubstantiation.**—The early Church believed in a presence of Christ in the Sacrament without defining the mode of the presence. The Scholastic Philosophy, attempting to define mysteries and commend them to the reason, began the controversy as to the mode of the presence in the early half of the ninth century, and gradually elaborated a theory in harmony with the current philosophy, which distinguished the *accidents* of a thing, as its density, colour, taste, &c., from the *substance* which underlies all its accidents. It was not till the fourth Lateran Council, 1215 A.D., that the doctrine was authoritatively sanctioned that the bread and wine, “while retaining all the accidents of bread and wine, have their substance transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ.”

**Communion in one kind.**—In the eleventh century the custom began of dipping the bread into the wine, and so administering the Sacrament. The Council of Claremont in 1095, and Pope Paschal in 1110, forbade the practice except in special cases. The practice was forbidden in England by the Council of London, 1175. Anselm was the first to affirm that the whole Christ was taken under either species, and Robert Pulleyn (1120 A.D.)

gives the injunction that "the flesh of Christ alone should be distributed to laymen." Not till the thirteenth century did this doctrine come into common use. Thomas Aquinas argued in favour of it; Bonaventura urged it out of reverence, for fear of spilling the wine. It was not authoritatively sanctioned till the Council of Constance (1415); but the Council of Basle, in the treaty of peace with the Bohemians known as the *Compactata*, allowed the communion to be administered in both kinds to such of their adults as should desire it (1433).

**Purgatory.**—Speculations about the condition of the good and wicked in the intermediate state began to assume prominence in the teaching of Gregory the Great. We find abundant traces of them in the Saxon Church in Bede and other writers. Otto Frisingensis in 1146 says, "Some affirm that there is in the unseen state a place of **purgatory**, in which those who are to be saved are either troubled with darkness only, or are refined by the fire of expiation." It was first put forth authoritatively as a doctrine by the Council of Florence (1438). The Primitive Church prayed for the saints departed, "for their increase of rest and felicity;" so it came to be held that prayer could benefit those who were in purgatory to procure a mitigation or shortening of their pains; then, since the Eucharist is the most effectual way of pleading with God, the priests were asked for their Eucharistic intercessions, and were paid for special Eucharistic services with this view; and so came the abuse of **masses for the dead** to deliver them out of purgatory.

**Saint-worship.**—The Primitive Church felt strongly the reality of the life after death, and believed that saints departed must still take an interest in those whom they have loved on earth, and that they must therefore still

pray to God for them. This led in time to asking the saints for their intercessions. It was thought that such petitions to the saints were most likely to be heard and to be effectual if offered at the burial-place of the saint or in the presence of any relic of him; and so grew the abuses of **saint-worship, relic-worship, and pilgrimages.**

**Indulgences.**—This originally meant the relaxation by the bishop, for sufficient reason, of the penance inflicted upon any one. The Mediæval theory on the subject was, that after the remission of the guilt and eternal penalty of sin there remains a certain amount of punishment to be endured either in this world or the next; that the merits of the saints, over and above the holiness necessary to their own salvation, constitute a treasury of merit; that the Church by its bishops has the power to apply to sinners out of this treasury of the merits of the saints to atone for their shortcomings; and this application of so many days' or years' remission of pain is called an indulgence. The sale of indulgences on a great scale, as a means of raising funds for the rebuilding of St. Peter's at Rome, and the coarse superstitions taught by Tetzels, one of the agents for their sale, in pressing his wares upon the people in Germany, was one of the immediate causes which stirred up Luther to the opposition to Rome which led to the great reform movements of the sixteenth century.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *THE REFORMATION*

TEMP. HENRY VIII.

THE attempts which Europe had made in the fifteenth century to obtain a reformation of the Church by the agency of General Councils had been frustrated by the diplomacy of Rome; the subsequent endeavours of the sovereigns to reform the National Churches had been only partially successful; the Church had relapsed into most of the old abuses, and the prospect appeared hopeless. For a long period there was a remarkable absence of original thought; religion was stagnant; but at length Western Europe was aroused by a movement which brought the Mediæval era to a close and began a new order of things.

#### THE CAUSES OF THE REFORMATION.

In dealing with the details of the subject it will be convenient to assume the reader's knowledge of the general history of the period, and to arrange the principal features of the reformation of the Church in the way in which they will be most easily apprehended and remembered.

**The New Learning.**—The fall of Constantinople, and of the Greek Empire with it, before the army of Mahomet II. in 1453 A.D., had for one result the scattering of

learned Greeks as refugees over Europe. European scholars eagerly embraced the opportunity to make themselves acquainted with the Greek language and with the treasures of learning enshrined in it. Princes and prelates became the patrons of **the New Learning**; the educated classes followed the fashion, and a powerful impulse and new direction were given to the intellect of the age. A reaction set in against the worn-out Mediæval civilisation, and an enthusiastic admiration of the classical literature, philosophy, and art. This current of free and vigorous thought was the great factor in the reform of religion. It broke the bonds of old authority and brought everything to the bar of free criticism. It was no longer a question merely of correcting administrative abuses, but of a searching examination into the bases of all existing institutions and accepted beliefs.

**The Art of Printing**, which coincided with the beginning of the New Learning, helped greatly to spread it among the people, by making books accessible to the large numbers whose desire for knowledge had been stimulated by the new spirit of inquiry.

Ecclesiasticalism dominated society; the new Classicism was its very opposite. It was natural that the new spirit should attack the old; it was almost inevitable that it should at first run into extremes; and as a result, in Italy, and in the court of Rome itself, the *literati* were more of pagan philosophers than Christian believers. The classical renaissance was long in arriving in England, and never went to the same extremes here. It is a testimony to the truth of Christianity that in this, as in other great periods when a new philosophy or science has brought men to inquire in no friendly spirit into the bases of revealed religion, the result has been that



religion has issued from the searching examination purified from the accretions of ages, and more firmly established than ever.

**The Policy of Henry VIII.**—It is not true that Henry VIII. was the author of the English Reformation, but it is true that if he had opposed it, it might have taken a different course. It is very probable that the question of his divorce from Katherine of Arragon had great influence in determining the king to throw himself on the side of the reform. For political reasons both Henry and Francis of France had lately held out to the Pope the threat of withdrawing their obedience from Rome and establishing a new patriarchate including the two kingdoms. The circumstances of the divorce case were calculated to bring home to Henry the intolerable evils of the submission to the corrupt court of Rome as a final court of appeal, and may well have been the "last straw" which led him to fulfil the threat, so often made from the time of Henry I., to resume the ancient independence of the English Church.

But though his personal grievance may have led Henry to come to the determination to break with Rome, he went into the matter with grave political motives. The king was not a mere sensual tyrant; he was an able statesman; and in this matter he pursued a great and far-reaching policy. The Wars of the Roses had broken the power of the feudal nobles; the only power which remained capable of controlling the power of the crown was the Church, with its great wealth and its ancient privileges. The king saw the opportunity which the times offered of accomplishing the design in which Henry II. had failed, of bringing the Church under the power of the crown. Henry had very little sympathy with the doctrinal side of the Reformation. To free the

crown and nation from all foreign authority, and then to reduce the Church under the rule of the crown, this, in short, was **Henry's reform policy**; and it may be admitted that it was a statesmanlike policy, and one which, if carried out with wisdom and moderation, was for the welfare of the Church and nation. It is remarkable that the king carried out every step of this revolution with careful observance of constitutional and legal forms. Wolsey had governed without Parliaments; but a Parliament was summoned (and packed) for the purpose of legalising the contemplated changes, which sat from 1529 to 1536, and is known as the Reformation Parliament. Convocation was summoned at the same time, and took its constitutional part in discussing and consenting to every step which was afterwards dealt with by Parliament and the crown.

**The King's Divorce.**—It is necessary to know something about a matter which exercised so large a practical influence upon the history of the reform movement as the case of the king's divorce.

The politic Henry VII., in obtaining the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella in marriage for his son Arthur, cemented the alliance with Spain and obtained a large dowry. When Arthur died, the king sought to retain these advantages by the simple device of putting Henry in Arthur's place. There was some wonder at the fact of the marriage of the young prince with his brother's widow, and Archbishop Warham made some remonstrance; but the king willed it, and the Pope gave a dispensation for it. They were married and lived together for fifteen years, and the wonder had long since died away. But at the end of those fifteen years, in 1526, when a treaty was on foot for the marriage of the Princess Mary to the Duke of

Orleans, the French king's ambassador raised the question whether Henry's marriage was not illegal, and the offspring of that marriage in consequence illegitimate.

Very probably the king was startled by the formal challenge of his daughter's legitimacy, and the possibility which it suggested of a disputed succession on the plea of the illegitimacy of his children. The successive deaths of six of his children, leaving him without a male heir, may have impressed him. Besides, he was tired of Katherine, who was fading into middle age (forty-three), while he himself was in the prime of manhood (thirty-five), and he had fixed his fancy upon one of the ladies of the queen's court. The effect of these mixed motives was the determination to seek for a divorce, and negotiations were opened with Rome.

The Pope was in a great difficulty. To grant a divorce on the ground that the marriage was illegal was to declare his predecessor's dispensation erroneous and invalid. Moreover, to grant the divorce was to make an enemy of the Emperor, who was the queen's nephew and who warmly espoused her cause. The Pope therefore interposed delays, clearly hoping that something would happen to relieve him of the necessity of giving any decision at all, and so the divorce case dragged on for six weary years. On May 31, 1529, Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius opened their legatine court in London, and the scene took place which Cavendish has described and Shakespeare dramatised, when the queen made her appeal to the king's heart and conscience, denied the validity of the court, and appealed to Rome. The Pope thereupon annulled his commission to the cardinals and recalled the case to Rome.

Then the king took up a new course, which it is said

was first suggested by Cranmer; this was to obtain the opinion of the universities and canonists of Europe on the question "whether marriage with a brother's widow is forbidden by the law of God, and whether the Pope has authority to give a dispensation for such a marriage;" and if their opinion was in the affirmative on the first clause and in the negative on the second, to treat the marriage as null and void from the beginning, and himself therefore an unmarried man, at liberty to marry whom and when he pleased.

Warham died early in 1533, and Cranmer was consecrated March 30, 1533. The Act for the restraint of appeals to Rome had been passed which made the archbishop's court the final court of appeal, and the new archbishop brought the cause to an end. He opened his court at Dunstable on the 10th of May; the queen did not appear and was pronounced contumacious; the court pronounced that the marriage of Henry and Katherine had been null and void from the beginning. On March 24, 1534, the Pope, thus driven to extremities, gave sentence on the contrary that the marriage was valid.

Anne Boleyn had for some time past lived in the king's palace and gone about with him, and it is charitable to suppose that they were privately married. On the declaration of the archbishop's sentence it was proclaimed that they had been married for some time, and Anne was crowned in May.

#### THE WITHDRAWAL OF OBEDIENCE FROM ROME.

The Church of England did not look upon its entry, after the Conquest, into strictly conditioned relations with Rome as the acknowledgment of a right *jure divino*

of the Papal See to supremacy. The idea of recession from the arrangement was habitually in the mind of the Church, and was threatened from time to time, from the reign of Henry I., in the generation after it had been entered into, down to the reign of Henry VIII. (see pp. 74, 115).

The Pope had received various warnings. The king's ambassadors more than once pointed out that their failure to move the Pope might lead the king to disclaim his authority; a petition to the Pope was signed by a number of members of the Houses of Lords and Commons (viz., 2 archbishops, 4 bishops, 2 dukes, 2 marquises, 13 earls, and 24 barons, and 22 abbots, 11 commoners and divines), threatening that if he further delayed to give sentence in the divorce case, they would take it to mean that they were left to take care of themselves and would seek their remedy elsewhere (Collier, ix. 86).

So early as 1531, the bishops and clergy in Convocation took the first formal step in the direction of resuming the independence of the English Church. Convocation petitioned the king complaining of the payment of annates to Rome, showing cause against their payment, and asking the king to procure an Act of Parliament putting an end to the exaction; and suggested that if the Pope should take any proceedings to enforce the payment, or withhold the usual Papal confirmation of episcopal appointments, the king and Parliament should concur in withdrawing the obedience of England from the See of Rome. In consequence of this petition an **Act against the payment of annates** (23 Henry VIII. c. 20) was passed, enacting that all such payments should cease, but that a payment of five per cent. on one year's value should be offered as

fees for the bulls usual at the consecration of a bishop, and that if the Pope did not accept the arrangement, bishops should be made and consecrated as heretofore in ancient time<sup>1</sup> by sundry the king's most noble progenitors. A final clause put this weapon into the king's hand to strengthen his negotiation with the Pope, with power to promulgate it if the negotiation should fail.

When the negotiation failed the Act was proclaimed in 1553. It was strengthened by an additional Act (25 Henry VIII. c. 20) reciting and confirming the former Act, and proceeding to define the way in which bishops were to be made and consecrated in future. It was substantially a continuance of the former customs and formalities: it retained the license to the chapter to elect, accompanied by a letter-missive containing the name of the person whom they should elect. It enacted that if the chapter should delay to elect above twelve days, the king may nominate and the archbishop and bishops shall proceed to consecrate; if the chapter refuse to elect or the bishops to consecrate, they incur the pains and penalties of the statute of premunire. This is the statute under which bishops are still appointed.

By the original decree of William I. no appeal was to be made to Rome, and no Papal document of any kind was to be received without the royal assent, and the Act of Premunire had strengthened that original decree; so that it was within the constitutional right of the crown to declare that there should be no more such appeals. This was done by an Act for restraining appeals (24 Henry VIII. c. 12). The ancient constitution

<sup>1</sup> During the Papal schism England did not recognise either of the rival Popes, and Henry V. ordered that bishops elect should be confirmed by their metropolitans (Collier, *Eccl. Hist.*, ii. viii.).

of England in Church and State, and the intention to continue it through the reforms of Henry VIII., are well set forth in the preamble to this Act. It begins by stating, "Whereas by divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles it is manifestly declared and expressed that this realm of England is an empire, and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one supreme head and king, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same; unto whom as a body politic, composed of all sorts and degrees of people, divided in terms and by names of Spirituality and Temporality, been bounden and owen to bear, next to God, a natural and humble obedience . . . the body spiritual whereof having power when any cause of the law divine happened to come in question, or of spiritual learning, then it was declared, interpreted, and showed by that part of the body politic called the Spirituality, now being usually called the English Church, which always hath been reputed and also found of that sort that, both for knowledge and integrity and sufficiency of number, it hath been always thought, and is also at this hour sufficient and meet of itself, without the intermeddling of any exterior person or persons, to declare and determine all such doubts and to administer all such offices and duties as to their rooms spiritual doth appertain; for the due administration whereof and to keep them from corruption and sinister affection, the king's most noble progenitors and the antecessors of the nobles of this realm have sufficiently endowed the said Church both with honour and possessions. . . . The laws temporal for trials of property, of lands and goods, and for the conservation of the people of the realm in unity and peace, without rapine or spoil, was and yet is administered,

adjudged, and executed by sundry judges and ministers of the other part of the said body politic called the Temporality; and both these authorities and jurisdictions do conjoin together in the due administration of justice, the one to help the other."

The continuity of the Church is set forth in a further section of the same Act, which declares that "all the spiritual prelates, pastors, ministers, and curates within the realm and the dominions of the same shall and may use, minister, execute, and do, or cause to be used, ministered, executed, and done, all sacraments, sacramentals, divine services, and all other things within the said realm and dominions, unto all the subjects of the same as Christian men owe to do." In the Act of Submission (25 Henry VIII. c. 19) it was added, that an appeal should lie from the archbishop to the Court of Chancery, which was to issue a commission under the great seal for delegates to be named by the crown to re-hear the cause.

Another Act concerning Peter's Pence and Dispensations (25 Henry VIII. c. 21), in 1533-34, sweeps away all remaining payments of any kind to the See of Rome, and authorises the Archbishop of Canterbury to grant all such dispensations, faculties, &c., not being contrary to the law of God, as were formerly granted by the Bishop of Rome.

#### THE RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE.

In the prosecution of his designs against the ancient constitutional liberties of the Church, Henry took a very strange course. In 1523 the king had allowed Wolsey to obtain a Papal bull empowering him to introduce some reforms in the Church. Wolsey had summoned



a national synod with that view; but when the clergy came together, they were not minded to put the matter into the cardinal's hands, and raised such obstacles that the design failed. It would seem that Wolsey had acted on the king's verbal permission, and had not taken the precaution to obtain a formal license under his hand and seal, and was therefore technically guilty of a breach of the Act of Premunire. The king now started the monstrous fiction that the clergy, in obeying Wolsey's summons to the synod of 1523, had acted under the Papal bull, and so involved themselves also in the penalties of the premunire; and lastly, the whole body of the laity were included in the charge as "maintainers, abettors, and fautors." The king's attorney formally commenced a suit in the King's Bench against the clergy and laity of England on this charge. The laity were graciously pardoned on a petition from the House of Commons; but the clergy were given to understand that the sentence of the court would leave them at the king's mercy, and that in order to ransom themselves they must consent to pay a fine to the king of £100,000 from the clergy of Canterbury and £20,000 from those of York, equal to almost £1,500,000 of modern money, and to acknowledge the royal supremacy. The money was voted by the Convocations; the recognition of the supremacy was a more difficult matter. The general acknowledgment was introduced into the preamble of the Act of Convocation voting the fine. It was at first proposed by the king's advisers to insert there the words, "of the English Church and clergy, of which the king alone is protector and supreme head." The blasphemous interpretation to which this phrase was liable being pointed out to the king, he agreed to the insertion of the words "after God"—*Cujus pro-*

*tector et supremum caput post Deum is solus est.* But it was held by the clergy that the phrase was still capable of being interpreted to contain a recognition of spiritual authority in the crown, and they refused to agree to it. The king sent for the bishops and other leading clergymen, and pledged himself not to exercise any other powers or jurisdiction than had been exercised by preceding sovereigns; but the clergy still objected. They suggested the words, "of the English Church and clergy, whereof we recognise his Majesty as the sole protector, the only supreme governor, and even, so far as the law of Christ will allow, the supreme head,"—*quantum per Christi legem licet.* The king raged and blustered according to his wont, "he would have no quantums and tantums;" but the clergy refused to give way, and the king had to accept the clause. In the Convocation of York, Tunstal, Bishop of Durham, presiding in the vacancy of the See of York, protested on the ground that the clause was still liable to misconstruction. "That we may not give scandal to weaker brethren, I conceive that this acknowledgment of the supreme headship should be so carefully expressed as to point wholly upon civil and secular jurisdiction. And with this explanation the English clergy, and particularly myself, are willing to go the utmost length in the recognition. But since the clause is not at present thus guarded and explained, I must declare my dissent, and desire my protestation may be entered upon the journal of Convocation." The clergy generally, however, seem to have thought that the meaning of the clause was sufficiently defined by what had been said on both sides in the course of its discussion.

In 1534 the Act of Supremacy (26 Henry VIII. c. 1) gave a parliamentary sanction to the royal supremacy as

then acknowledged by the clergy in Convocation: "Be it enacted that the king, his heirs and successors, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed as the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*," and "shall have full power and authority to visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain and amend," "all errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities."

In the following year, this surrender by the Church of the liberties and immunities it had enjoyed since the Conquest was practically carried out. The House of Commons, probably at the instigation of the king, presented a petition to the crown against the abuses of the ecclesiastical courts and other abuses, the principal being that the Convocation made canons without the consent of the king and laity, and that church discipline was harshly enforced. Convocation replied to the petition, but the reply was not considered satisfactory; and the king dictated to the clergy the terms on which in future the canons of the Church should be recognised by the law and enforced by the aid of the civil authority. These were accepted by Convocation and embodied in an **Act of Parliament for the submission of the clergy** (25 Henry VIII. c. 19): (1) That Convocation should assemble only with the royal permission; (2) that it should make no canons without the royal license; (3) that when made, they should have no force till they had received the royal sanction; (4) that even then they should have no force if found to be opposed to the laws of the realm or the rights of the crown; (5) that a reform of the canon law should be undertaken by a commission of bishops and others; (6) that the ancient laws of the Church, not inconsistent with the laws of the realm and the king's prerogative, should continue in force until further legislation abolished them.

The power to appoint this commission was renewed in 1535, and again in 1544, but was not acted upon. In the reign of Edward VI. (in 1551) commissioners were appointed, and drew up the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*, but this was not legalised. The question was revived after the Restoration, but there was an indisposition to give a new edge to the sword of ecclesiastical discipline, and the old weapons, formidable looking but clumsy and obsolete, were allowed to remain. Thus the "further legislation" never took place, and consequently the ancient canon law of the Church of England still holds good where it is not contrary to the statute law and does not interfere with the rights of the crown.

The year 1534 may be conveniently taken as the critical year of the Reformation. In that year the Convocations formally declared that **the Bishop of Rome hath no greater jurisdiction conferred on him by God in this kingdom of England than any other bishop**, and this was signed by the clergy, and by the monks generally. In that year the Annates Act was published, and the Act for restraining appeals was passed, which legally threw off the authority of Rome; and in that year the Act for the submission of the clergy was passed, which abolished the ancient constitutional privileges of the Church. In the same year the **Act of Succession** was passed, which declared Anne's marriage lawful and Elizabeth heir to the throne, and required all subjects to take an oath of approval of this declaration. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, who had resigned his chancellorship two years before, and the monks of the London Charterhouse, were imprisoned for refusing the oath.

The **Treason Act** of the same year (26 Henry VIII.

c. 13) made it high treason to practise or wish harm to the king, queen, or heir-apparent, to use words denying their titles, or to call the king a heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel, or usurper of the crown. Since the Act was repealed in the next reign, we are at liberty to express an opinion as to its tyrannical character. In this same year the venerable Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and the eminent ex-Chancellor More were dealt with by attainder, and suffered death upon the scaffold.

#### THE SPOLIATION OF THE CHURCH.

In pursuance of the king's design to lessen the power of the Church, he procured an Act of Parliament (27 Henry VIII. c. 28) in 1535-36 for the **suppression of the smaller religious houses**, viz., those whose income was less than £200 a year. He had previously issued a commission to inquire into their condition. The business of the commissioners was to make out a case against the smaller houses, and they did it; reporting many abuses, which possibly existed, and trying to deprive them of popular sympathy by bringing monstrous charges, which nobody now believes. The measure was unpopular, and the Commons were unwilling to pass the bill. But Sir H. Spelman relates that "when the bill had stuck long in the Lower House, and could get no passage, the king commanded the Commons to attend him in his gallery, where he let them wait till late in the afternoon, and then coming out of his chamber, walking a turn or two amongst them, and looking angrily at them, first on one side and then on the other, at last, 'I hear,' saith he, 'that my bill will not pass; but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads,' and without other rhetoric or persuasion returned to his

chamber. Enough was said; the bill was passed, and all was given to him as he desired."

The king's object was twofold; it was not merely to seize the property of these foundations; it was also to get rid of the Friars. Their organisation placed them entirely under the orders of the Roman court, and they were necessarily determined advocates of the Papal claims; and, spread over the country as they were, and having the ear of the common people, they were formidable opponents of the king's measures. These Mendicant Orders, having no income and no property beyond their churches and convents, came under the Act. **The Friars were summarily suppressed**, unfrocked, and turned out of doors. Some of the inhabitants of the small monasteries sought refuge in the larger houses of the same order.

**The Surrender of the Great Houses.**—The commissioners who reported against the small houses bore witness that "in the great solemn monasteries of this realm (thanks be to God) religion is right well kept and observed." But this did not save them.

The monasteries, largely through their own cultivation and good management of the waste lands originally given to them, had become wealthy, and their noble churches and cloister buildings, distributed three or four or half-a-dozen in each county, were an ornament to the land. It may be admitted that they had ceased to be of so much direct use to the country as they were in earlier times, and some reform of them would have been a wise measure; they afforded a source from which new bishoprics and colleges might have been founded, and the number of parochial clergy increased and their stipends improved; while some of them might very well have been left, under revised conditions, to their ancient

uses as places of learning and prayer. It was under some such pretext that the king sought to reconcile the people to the measures which he proceeded to take against them.

The mode of procedure is characteristic of the mind which attacked the secular clergy under the Statute of Premunire. No bill was asked from Parliament, following the precedent of the smaller houses, to put the great houses into the king's hand. The abbots were numerous in Parliament, many of the monks were the younger sons of noble and powerful families, and the monasteries were venerable in the eyes of the people; it would probably have been difficult, even by threats, to get such a bill through the two Houses. So the attack was made in a different way. First, commissioners were sent round to make out a case against the houses. Then the legal fiction was introduced that these ancient foundations were the property in fee of the abbot and monks who happened to be the present life-tenants. Then, instead of attacking them in a body, they were diplomatically dealt with one by one. The communities were simply invited to surrender their houses to the king. Some were bribed by the promise of other preferment, others were threatened with criminal proceedings on one charge or another. Sometimes an abbot, who could not in conscience surrender his house, was induced to resign his office, and another man was made abbot for the moment, to complete the business. In a few cases an abbot who could neither be bribed nor frightened was got rid of by trumping up some charge against him and hanging him. The venerable Abbot of Glastonbury and the Abbots of Reading and Colchester were thus dealt with. Thus the whole body of monks was sup-

pressed, as the Friars had been four years before. The king, still scrupulously observant of legal forms, proceeded to get a parliamentary title to the property which he had thus seized. To pave the way for it, he first got an Act (31 Henry VIII. c. 9) empowering the king to create new bishoprics—he talked of creating eighteen—then he brought forward another Act (31 Henry VIII. c. 13) whose preamble states that “sundry abbots, priors, abbesses, prioresses, and other ecclesiastical governors and governesses of divers monasteries . . . of their own free and voluntary minds and good wills and assents, without constraint, co-action, or compulsion of any manner of person or persons, have resigned and granted to the king all their houses, estates, and privileges, and therefore it is enacted that the king shall have, hold, possess, and enjoy them to himself and his successors for ever.” The ruin of the monasteries and the disturbance of the devotional feelings of the people stirred up a strong feeling against the government which went the length of armed rebellion. A rising in Lincolnshire in the autumn of 1536, easily put down, broke out again in Yorkshire under the picturesque name of **the Pilgrimage of Grace**. It was so formidable that the king temporised, issued a general pardon, and promised redress of grievances. Early in the following year, however, he took the occasion of some new disturbances to strike terror into the opponents of his measures by wholesale executions of all ranks and classes of the disaffected.

Out of the monastic property the king founded five new bishoprics, viz., Bristol, Chester, Gloucester, Oxford, and Peterborough. Some of the houses were given by the king to the representatives of their original founders; with others he endowed a new race of nobles



and landed gentry; a considerable number of people, by gift or purchase of manors and lands, became sharers in the spoil. Finally, in 1545-46 an Act of Parliament (37 Henry VIII. c. 4) placed the endowments of the Universities, of all colleges of priests, and of all chantries and guilds, at the mercy of the king, and commissioners were appointed to visit them; but the king's death, January 28, 1547 (in the 56th year of his age and the 38th of his reign), arrested their action.

#### THE DOCTRINAL REFORM.

The idea of the principal actors in the reforming movement of the first period, *i.e.*, the reign of Henry VIII., was to bring the Church back to the doctrine, organisation, discipline, and customs of the early ages of the Church. The formal withdrawal from the obedience to Rome, the assertion of the supremacy of the crown over all its subjects, were defended on the ground that they were a return to the model of earlier times; and similarly the doctrinal reforms were undertaken with the clear avowal that they were the sweeping away of mediæval accretions and a return to the primitive standards of the faith, *viz.*, the Holy Scriptures, the three Creeds, the General Councils, and the ancient Fathers.

The **work of doctrinal reformation** was effected by the revision of the service books, and the formulation of articles of religion binding upon the clergy, and by the publication of translations of the Bible, of authoritative expositions of doctrine from time to time, and the issue of popular devotional books. The getting rid of superstitious practices was effected largely by the bishops in the visitation of their dioceses. It will be sufficient to note the principal steps.

Tyndale's translation of the **New Testament** (1525) was not permitted by the authorities to be introduced into England, but it was brought in secretly and circulated among the more zealous Reformers. It was an admirable translation, and the basis of the present authorised version.

Coverdale's translation of the **Bible** was published in 1535, and is probably that which was ordered in 1536 to be set up in the churches. Matthews' Bible was published in 1537; it was mainly Tyndale's translation (1525) with prefaces and notes. Cranmer's great Bible was published in 1539.

The **Breviary** was expurgated from all mention of the Bishop of Rome and of saints not mentioned in the Bible as early as 1516, in the time of Wolsey and Warham, and in 1533 the **Missal** was reformed on the same principles. In 1542 Convocation appointed a committee to consider a more thorough revision of the service books. In the following year it published a translation and revision of the **Litany**, a service which, by its simplicity and directness, and its picturesque accessories of procession and music, was very popular. In the same year was published a revised edition of the popular book of devotion, the English **Prymer**, which contained translations of matins, evensong, and compline, the Creed and Ten Commandments, certain psalms and prayers for various occasions, &c.

In 1547 Convocation approved, and an Act of Parliament legalised, the use of a **Communion Service**, which Cranmer had drawn up in obedience to the king's injunction to "pen a form for the alteration of the mass into a Communion." It took the old service (expurgated in 1542) and added the exhortation beginning "Dearly beloved in the Lord," the invitation, "Ye that do truly,"

&c., the confession, absolution, comfortable words, and prayer of humble access, "We do not presume," &c., as we still have them, and the first half of the words of administration, "The body of our Lord," &c., "The blood of our Lord," &c., and the first half of the concluding benediction, "The peace of God," &c.

In 1536 Convocation agreed upon **Ten Articles of Religion**. They set forth the Holy Scriptures and the three Creeds as the canons of the faith, and declare all contrary opinions, as condemned by the first four holy Councils, to be condemned. Five of these related to matters of the faith, baptism, penance, the Eucharist, and justification; the other five to laudable ceremonies used in the church, viz., images, the honour to be given to saints, prayers to saints, rites and ceremonies, purgatory. This was followed up by a book drawn up by a commission of bishops and other divines, entitled **The Institution** (*i.e.*, instruction) of a **Christian Man**, a very able and even eloquent exposition of the Creed, Commandments, and Sacraments, and an explanation of the usual religious ceremonies. The work may be regarded as the great popular exposition of the doctrines of this first period of the Reformation.

Here the progress of doctrinal reform halted, and for a moment there was a reaction. Foreign refugees, Anabaptists and others, had introduced wild opinions, political and religious, which were taken up by the more fanatical of the people; the danger which must always exist when ignorant men are encouraged to form and act upon their own crude notions of politics and religion became so evident that the authorities took alarm, and made a stand against further innovations. In 1539 **Six Articles of Religion** were issued, in which (1) transubstantiation was affirmed; (2) communion in both

kinds declared not necessary ; (3) priests not to marry ; (4) vows of celibacy to be kept ; (5) private masses approved ; (6) auricular confession necessary. The Act of Parliament which legalised these articles contained a penal clause enacting that offenders against the first clause should be adjudged to be heretics and should be burned, and offenders against the other clauses should be subject to the penalties of felony. Historians assure us that few if any suffered under this dreadful Act.

**The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition of a Christian Man**, published in 1543, was a revised edition of the "Institution of a Christian Man," modified to harmonise with the Six Articles. The two books were popularly distinguished, and to a certain extent rightly characterised, by the names of the Bishops' Book and the King's Book.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE REFORMATION—ITS OSCILLATIONS

TEMP. EDWARD VI. AND MARY

**Edward VI., 1547 A.D.—The Influence of Foreign Reformers.**—Several things which were published at the beginning of the reign of Edward VI. were really the work of the previous reign. The English form of Communion was not ready for publication till now; what is called the **First Prayer Book of Edward VI.**, confirmed by Convocation and legalised by Parliament (2 and 3 Edward VI. c. 1) in 1549, was really the work of the commission appointed in 1542; the same may be said of the **Reformed Ordinal** authorised in 1550, and of the **First Book of Homilies**, 1547.

The general spirit of the religious action of this reign was very different from that which had inspired the reforms of the previous period. A strong spirit of **Erastianism** was combined with a strong leaning towards the novel doctrines of the **Swiss Reformers**.

This Erastianism showed itself in the Act (1 Edward VI. c. 12) which made it treason to affirm that the king was not supreme head on earth of the Church of England; in that (2 Edward VI. c. 2) which dropped the old form of election of bishops under a *congé d'élire* and substituted direct nomination by letters patent; and in the clause inserted in their patents restricting the power

of ecclesiastical jurisdiction (as distinguished from the spiritual authority inherent in the episcopal office) to life or *good behaviour*, and directing that it should be exercised in the king's name.

This leaning towards the foreign novelties led to the invitation of a number of foreign divines to settle in England and to teach their peculiar views here. Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr were put into the influential position of professors of divinity, the one at Cambridge, the other at Oxford. Paul Fagius was made Hebrew Professor at Cambridge.

The First Prayer Book of Edward VI. had hardly been brought into general use when it was called in, and a **Second Prayer Book of Edward VI.** (5 and 6 Edward VI. c. 1), 1552, was issued, which contained considerable alterations in the direction of these new opinions. In the same year **Forty-Two Articles of Religion** were issued of the same tendency.

In 1549 and in 1550, Bonner, Bishop of London, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, were deprived under the "good behaviour" clause, their ill-behaviour being that they did not take kindly to the new opinions and practices, and Ridley and Poinet were set in their places.

The spoliation of the Church continued. An Act of the first year of the reign renewed that of the last year of Henry which gave to the king the property of the **chantries and of the guilds**. Some of the chantries were really chapels of ease, and many of the chantry priests acted as assistant curates. The guilds were the benefit clubs of the period; the fact that prayer for the members and their relatives, living and dead, was one of their customary practices, afforded the pretext for seizing their property as devoted to superstitious uses.

The last gleanings of the harvest of church property

were gathered into the royal coffers by commissioners sent by the king (1553) to visit all the cathedrals and churches and seize the superfluous plate and ornaments for the king's use.

The arbitrary **Erastianism** of the Council and the theological extremes to which the religious changes were tending, more than the disposition of the courtiers to complete the impoverishment of the Church, filled moderate and sound churchmen with alarm; it looked as if they might soon be driven to choose between the acceptance of the scheme of doctrine and church government of the Swiss reformers and persecution.

**Queen Mary, 1553.**—These fears reconciled many to the sudden and strong reaction which took place on the accession of Mary. The daughter of Katherine of Arragon had steadfastly refused to accept any of the religious changes; they were associated in her mind with what she could not but regard as her mother's wrongs. The *coup d'état* by which Northumberland tried to place Lady Jane Grey upon the throne, and the rebellion of Wyatt, both in the name of reform, added political reasons to religious motives for firm resistance to innovation. Immediately on her accession the queen took steps to undo the reform. Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were arrested and sent to the Tower. Gardiner was released from the Tower and made chancellor and minister.

A packed Parliament made little difficulty about repealing the religious legislation of the late reign and restoring things very much to the condition in which they stood at the close of Henry's reign. The Archbishop of York and the bishops of St. David's, Chester, and Bristol were deprived for marriage; the bishops of Lincoln, Gloucester, and Hereford, consecrated under

Edward's letters patent, were dismissed for "ill-behaviour;" Ridley of London, Poynt of Winchester, and Scory of Chichester were removed as intruders, to make way for the bishops of those Sees who had been deprived by Edward. Barlow resigned Bath and Wells. Sixteen new bishops were consecrated; many of the more prominent and extreme of the reforming party fled beyond sea, but the great mass of the clergy held to their cures; probably many of them shared the opinion that it was high time that something was done to arrest the rapid degradation of the Church. Parliament by address to the queen asked for reconciliation with Rome, and Cardinal Pole as legate gave the nation plenary absolution. Parliament (1 and 2 Phil. and Mary, c. 8) repealed all Acts since 20 Henry VIII. against the Pope's authority, only it stipulated for the security of all grants of church property.

In 1555 the dreadful persecution began which has made Mary's reign odious in the memory of the English people, and done more than all besides to set the heart of the nation against the tyranny of Rome. In this year Rogers, Hooper, Ridley, Latimer, and others were condemned of heresy and burned. In the following year (1556) Cranmer and others were burnt, and Pole was made archbishop. In 1557 the persecution still continued; the total number of persons burnt in this reign was 277, besides those who were punished by imprisonment, confiscation, and fines; among them were 5 bishops, 21 clergymen, 8 lay gentlemen, 84 tradesmen, 100 husbandmen, servants, and labourers, 55 women, and 4 children. The persecution was arrested by the death of the queen. Pole died on the following day.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the details of the legislation of Edward VI. or of Mary, since these reigns



may be regarded as in a sense parenthetical. The excesses of this reign, and the reaction in the opposite direction of the next, were wiped out of the statute book by the early legislation of Elizabeth. The revolutionary policy of the one reign, and the intolerance, and especially the cruelties of the other, left a strong impression on the mind of the people, and influenced the future course of events ; but the ecclesiastical policy of Elizabeth and the reforms of her reign are the logical continuation of those of the period of Henry VIII.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *THE SETTLEMENT OF THE REFORMATION*

Elizabeth, 1558 A.D.—When Elizabeth came to the throne, it was well known that she had adhered to the reformed doctrine during the reign of her Romanist sister Mary, just as Mary had adhered to the unreformed doctrine during the reign of Edward; and it seemed probable that the violent religious changes which took place on Mary's accession would now be followed by equally violent changes in the other direction. Elizabeth was sincerely attached to the principles of the Reformation as they had been laid down in her father's time, viz., the assertion of the independence of the English Church and a return to the standards of the Early Church, but she had no sympathy with the extreme views which had been introduced in Edward's reign.

The situation was one of great difficulty and danger. The queen was fortunate in her choice of advisers, Cecil in civil, and Parker in ecclesiastical affairs. Their ecclesiastical policy was on the one side to reassure the great body of moderate people who desired no further great changes, and on the other to conciliate the more advanced school of reformers, and so to settle the Reformation on a permanent basis and restore peace and unity.

The coronation showed at once the gravity of the

situation, for Oglethorpe, Bishop of Carlisle, was the only diocesan bishop who consented to take part in the ceremony. A Parliament was at once summoned, and, with the subserviency of all the Parliaments of the Tudor reigns, did very much what the crown desired it to do. It repealed the Repealing Act of Mary, but the legislation of Henry and Edward was not indiscriminately revived; some of their Acts were carefully selected for revival, while others were repealed; the general effect being to revive the reforms of Henry, but to relax the grasp of the crown upon the liberties of the Church. The supremacy of the crown was reasserted with a change of the title from Supreme Head to Supreme Governor, and a Court of High Commission was established to exercise the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the crown. A trace of the old tyranny is seen in an Act providing that for maintaining that any foreign prince or prelate has any spiritual jurisdiction in England, the penalties should be for the first offence fine or imprisonment, for the second the penalties of premunire, and for the third those of treason.

The **spoliation of the Church** was still continued. An Act of this year resumed to the crown the first-fruits and tenths which Mary had restored to the Church, and another Act empowered the queen, on the avoidance of any See, to take such of its lands as she might think proper in exchange for impropriate tithes which had come into the hands of the crown with monastic properties. The Church was allowed no voice in the exchanges, and got very much the worst of the bargain.

In the hope of winning over some of the higher clergy, the queen directed that a conference should be held in Westminster Abbey between ten or twelve bishops and divines on each side; but it was broken off by the

Romanist side, who had nothing to gain by it. In recommending the Reformation to the people, Jewel, in a sermon at Paul's Cross, put forth the points of difference in twenty-seven propositions, and gave the famous challenge that "if any one sufficient sentence out of any ancient father, or general council, or from Holy Scripture, or example from the primitive Church of the first six centuries after Christ, declarative of the Roman view could be produced, he would give in his submission." There was much disputation in print on both sides. Jewel's *Apologia pro Ecclesia Anglicana* was the ablest defence of the Reformation in the then state of the controversy.

In 1559 a new **Prayer Book** was confirmed by Convocation<sup>1</sup> and authorised by Parliament; it was the Second Book of Edward VI. with a few alterations in the direction of the First Book.

In 1562 the doctrinal settlement of the Reformation was brought to a conclusion. Convocation confirmed **Thirty-nine Articles of Religion**, which were for the most part the same as the forty-two articles of 1552; the most material difference was that the new articles omitted the express declaration of the former against the corporal presence of Christ in the Sacrament.

Certain **Injunctions** were now issued by the crown, and commissioners were appointed to tender the oath of supremacy to the bishops and clergy; this was accompanied by an explanation of the meaning of the royal supremacy, that it is "under God to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within these

<sup>1</sup> It has been usually supposed that this Prayer Book was revised by a committee of divines. Mr. Joyce, the historian of Convocation, has recently discovered a document which makes it seem probable that it was done by an episcopal synod.

realms, dominions, and country, either ecclesiastical or temporal, so as no foreign power ought to have any superiority over them." The title supreme head had already been altered into supreme governor. This test discriminated those of the clergy who finally adhered to the Papacy. "The whole number of the clergy deprived at this time for refusing the oath were 14 bishops (out of 15—4 had died before Mary's death and 6 immediately after) and 3 bishops elect, 1 abbot, 4 priors, and 1 abbess, 12 deans, 14 archdeacons, 60 canons or prebendaries, 100 priests well preferred, 14 heads of colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, to which may be added about 20 doctors in several faculties; out of about 9400 spiritual promotions."

This refusal of the higher clergy to accept the Reformation is very remarkable, especially as many of them had accepted the reforms of Henry and Edward. In explanation it may be said that the higher clergy, whose duty it was to take a broad and deep view of the situation, had been greatly alarmed by the excesses of the previous reign, which had threatened not only the external organisation, but the essential doctrines and principles of the Church. They dreaded the resumption of these dangerous innovations, and probably came to the conclusion that the continuance of the organic union of the Church of England with the rest of the churches of Europe, under the headship of the Bishop of Rome, was the greatest protection of the Church of England against the violent oscillations created by the personal predilections of the sovereign, and against the revolutionary designs of the extreme reformers.

The refusal of the bishops to recognise the new state of things left the Episcopate in a lamentable condition. The last year of Mary's reign was a time of

terrible mortality, so that at the accession of Elizabeth ten sees were unoccupied. Of the seventeen remaining sees, only four were canonically filled, Durham, London, Llandaff, and Sodor and Man, all the other prelates having been either illicitly consecrated or translated, so that they did not possess "jurisdiction." Of these, four, viz., Tunstall of Durham and Bonner of London, together with the bishops who had uncanonical possession of the remaining sees, were deprived by an abuse of the royal power similar to that which had been exercised by Mary. It became necessary to fill the vacant sees, and to do it in such a way as to secure a valid legal and canonical succession.

Parker was chosen for the See of Canterbury, and was canonically elected under a royal *conge d'élire* in August. Some of the bishops who had been deprived in Mary's reign were restored, and other eminent divines were nominated and elected to other vacant sees, but the consecration of Parker was delayed until the following December.

**The consecration of Parker** is a point of great importance, because he was the principal link through whom the ancient episcopal succession was derived to our modern bishops, and it has for this reason been made the subject of attack by opponents of the Church of England. The first attack is known by the name of "**the Nag's Head fable.**" Forty-four years after the event a story was started that all the consecration Parker had was that at a meeting at a noted London tavern of those days, several divines laid a Bible on the head of Parker and said some prayers. This story rested on the testimony of a Roman priest named Holywood, who stated that one Neale, a chaplain of Bishop Bonner, had witnessed the scene through a hole in the door. The

story seems to have been a pure invention, and was refuted immediately on its publication, and is given up by all respectable controversialists. The fact is, that every one concerned understood very well the importance of the occasion, and that the greatest care was taken to make every step in it legal and canonical and to put every step on record. The consecration took place in the chapel of Lambeth Palace, under the Ordinal of Edward VI., with dignified ceremonial, with the assistance of the proper officials and in the presence of sufficient witnesses. The consecrators were Barlow, formerly Bishop of Bath and Wells in the time of Henry and Edward, who had fled abroad to avoid the Marian persecution, and was now Bishop elect of Chichester; Hodgkin, suffragan Bishop of Bedford; Coverdale, ex-Bishop of Exeter; and Scory, ex-Bishop of Chichester, and now elect of Hereford. It is expressly recorded that all the consecrating bishops laid their hands on Parker's head, and all repeated the words of consecration.

The principal objections taken to the validity of the consecration are two: first, that it cannot be proved that Barlow, the chief actor in the consecration, was a bishop; and second, that the act of consecration was not valid because it did not include the presentation of the insignia of the episcopal office, the staff and ring.

The doubt thrown upon Barlow's episcopal character is based upon the fact that there is no official record of it extant either in the register of his own see of Bath and Wells or in the register of Canterbury. The answer is that the register of Bath and Wells is lost, so that we cannot say whether Barlow's consecration did or did not appear in it: that the register of Canterbury at that period was so carelessly kept that the record is wanting of six out of twenty-six bishops consecrated in Warham's

time, and of nine out of thirty-six in Cranmer's time. But there is abundant evidence that Barlow, one of Henry's statesman-bishops, was recognised as a bishop by his brother bishops, by the House of Lords, by all the world, and was never challenged till these days. But if Barlow was not a bishop, that does not invalidate the consecration, for there were three other consecrators whose episcopal character is undoubted, who all laid their hands on his head, and all repeated the words of consecration. And it is universally admitted that though it is regular that four bishops should assist in the consecration of an archbishop, the consecration by one is valid.

As to the other objection, it is a comparatively modern Roman theory that the matter of consecration consists in the giving of the staff and ring; this ceremonial was introduced in Mediæval times, but for a thousand years previously the imposition of hands was the essential matter of consecration, and so the great Roman ritual authorities declared.<sup>1</sup>

It may be convenient to deal connectedly with **the measures of the Papist party**. For a few years the Pope entertained hopes that the Church of England would continue to recognise his authority, and his adherents continued to attend their parish churches; but at length the hope was abandoned, and Pius IV., in 1570, proceeded to excommunicate Elizabeth, declaring her illegitimate and absolving her subjects from their allegiance. His adherents began thenceforward to withdraw themselves from the authorised worship. A college was

<sup>1</sup> The subject has been exhaustively treated by A. Haddon in his edition of the Works of Archbishop Bramhall, and by other modern writers: the most recent is the Rev. E. Denny in "Anglican Orders and Jurisdiction."



established at St. Omers, and afterwards removed to Douay and back again to St. Omers, for the education of English priests to minister in secret to their recusant countrymen, and a version of the New Testament was put forth in 1582, the Old Testament in 1609-10, which continue to be the English Bible of the Papal party to the present time.

The fanatics of the party began, as at the beginning of Mary's reign, to contemplate political revolution as the best means of reversing the religious state of things ; and during the great part of Elizabeth's reign her life was threatened and the kingdom harassed by a succession of Popish plots. It was the act of the court of France rather than that of the young and beautiful Mary Stuart, then living in France as the wife of the Dauphin, that her claims to the English throne were put forward on the death of Mary, and that she assumed the title of Queen of England ; but Mary never repudiated the claim, and it was the basis of several plots, and a constant source of inquietude. It was the cause of the rising in the North under the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland in 1569, of the Duke of Norfolk's plot with Spanish aid in 1571-72, and of Babington's conspiracy to kill the queen in 1588. The hard treatment of recusants, the execution of Jesuit emissaries and seminary priests, were due more to State policy than to religious intolerance. The very fact of their acceptance of the Papal supremacy was enough to carry with it a suspicion of disloyalty, seeing that the Pope had declared Elizabeth deprived of her throne and forbidden her subjects to obey her on pain of excommunication.

The execution of Mary Stuart in 1587 delivered the queen and kingdom from the dangers of internal

treason; the defeat of the Grand Armada in the following year (1588), from the dangers of foreign invasion. During the latter portion of the reign the kingdom was at peace and the Reformation was secure.

This peace and security, however, left **Puritanism predominant** in the Church, and for this the reign of Mary is to blame. The horrible burnings in the late reign had created in the popular mind a hatred of Rome and of everything which seemed to be a remnant of Rome or a tendency towards it. The exiles of the Marian reign had returned full of the doctrines of the communities among whom they had sojourned. The sufferings of these exiles ensured them popularity on their return to their own country; some of the most eminent of them had been promoted to places of dignity and influence in the Church. The party was strongly represented both in Parliament and Convocation, and had powerful protectors at court.

In 1564-65 the queen called the attention of the archbishop to the want of conformity of many of the clergy, and desired him to enforce discipline. The archbishop, assisted by other commissioners in causes ecclesiastical, accordingly drew up a set of **Advertisements** or ordinances on the subject of the ordinary apparel of the clergy, their ministerial vestments, the mode of celebrating divine worship, &c. The queen refused to confirm them, and they went out under the authority of the commissioners. A considerable number of the clergy still refused to conform, and were suspended and sequestered.

The Nonconformists put forth their case in an **Admonition to Parliament**, of which Cartwright was believed to be the principal author. This was answered by Whitgift, then Master of Trinity. Cartwright, a deacon

in the Church of England, and a man of some learning and ability, had been one of the Marian exiles. Soon after his return he was made Lady Margaret Lecturer in Divinity at Cambridge, and took advantage of his position to teach the Genevan doctrine and discipline, and was removed by the University authorities. Thereupon he set up a **Presbyterian Society** (1572) at Wandsworth, and began to practise what he had preached. In 1593, however, he came to a better mind, and was reconciled and restored to his benefice; but he could not undo the mischief he had set on foot.

Archbishop Parker died in 1576, and was succeeded by **Grindal**, a man who sympathised with the scruples of the Nonconformists, and whose laxity of discipline allowed them great latitude. At length the queen called upon the archbishop to put a stop to the prophesyings, which in so many cases were really dissenting conventicles; and on his refusal he was suspended from jurisdiction, and continued so till his death a few months afterwards.

In 1582 a considerable number of **Puritan** ministers held a council in London, and agreed to act upon a **Book of Discipline** which Cartwright had drawn up. Its general policy was that the Puritan clergy should retain their places in the Church, as their predecessors had done through the changes of the previous reigns, and should preach their own doctrines and introduce their own practices so far as circumstances would allow. The course amounted almost to a conspiracy to introduce Calvinism under cover of the lawful order. Their plan was to create over the kingdom an ecclesiastical organisation of classical, district, and general assemblies; the class consisting of a few neighbouring ministers, generally about twelve, well affected to the party; the

district including several of these classes, so that there were about three in a county ; and the general assembly being a synod of the whole body. The clergy of their persuasion nominated to a benefice were to apply to the *classis* in which the benefice was situated and obtain its sanction before accepting the bishop's induction into the benefice, which was treated as a mere formal recognition by the State official. The scheme provided for electing churchwardens and collectors for the poor of their party and giving them the Calvinist status of lay elders and deacons. Puritan incumbents were to dispense as far as possible with the legal ritual of the Prayer Book ; they were to teach the scriptural character of the Calvinist organisation and discipline as well as doctrine. Arrangements were made for the propagation and support of the Puritan cause in parishes whose incumbents were not of their party. One method was by instituting lecturers of their views. An old privilege of the universities was taken advantage of to appoint twelve lecturers who had a right to preach in any parish. Another method was to found lectureships in important town churches, which gave their preachers access to the pulpit for an afternoon or evening sermon. Another device was the holding of what they called "**Prophecyings**," irregular meetings for prayer and exposition of the Scriptures, which, when conducted in harmony with the Church's system, might be useful auxiliaries, but in opposition were simply dissenting conventicles, in which ministers who had been silenced for nonconformity, and laymen, often took the opportunity to put forward their views. One way of dealing with the regular church service was to let a curate, or even a layman, say the prayers, and then for the incumbent or lecturer to come in, in Geneva gown, in time to go into the pulpit ; there

he would conduct a supplementary service, viz., a psalm, a short address introductory of the prayer, a long extempore prayer, then the sermon, followed by other extempore prayers and psalmody.

In such ways as these the minds of the people, especially in the great towns, were leavened with Calvinism, and the way was prepared for the great events which happened in the reign of Charles I.

It was not, then, antipathy to Rome, or their special views on election and grace, which made the Puritan party so popular. It was the maintenance of certain principles which had fallen into the background—the principle of individualism in religion; the freedom of the Church of Christ from the royal interference of which the late reigns had afforded such violent examples; the rights of the laity in the conduct of church affairs; but it was more than anything else the personal character which seemed to go with the doctrine, the strong faith in God's government of the world, the ascetic piety, the fervent religious zeal. The weakness of the party was that its adherents tended to be narrow, uncharitable, sour, almost Manichæan, and that the necessity of affecting an exalted strain of piety by the average adherents of the party inevitably led to a vast amount of hypocrisy. The controversy brought forth the **Ecclesiastical Polity** of the "Judicious Hooker," which for wide and deep learning, sound judgment, controversial skill, and stately eloquence, is one of the literary treasures of the Church of England.

**Whitgift** (1583) succeeded to the archbishopric, a man of learning and piety, and possessing the statesmanlike capacity and firmness which the office and the time needed. He held the ultra-Augustinian doctrines of grace which by this time were predominant in England,

but with a firm belief in the lawfulness (to say the least) of the constitution and discipline of the Church, and a strong conviction that it was for the welfare of religion that lawless disobedience should not be tolerated. He took successful pains, however, to win men over by argument and kindness, and though firm, was not harsh in his administration. He had the satisfaction, as has been said, of winning Cartwright back from the more extreme of his opinions, and restoring him to his benefice in Warwick.

In his episcopate another set of opinions emerged out of the midst of the Nonconformist ranks and crystallised into a definite sect. Robert Brown, a clergyman, taught that any assembly of Christian men were at liberty to form themselves into a congregation, to formulate their own creed, appoint their own ministers, and regulate their own church life, and, while maintaining independence of all other churches, to be recognised by them all as a church. Brown himself eventually renounced his errors and returned to the Church, but his principles were taken up by others and propagated with great zeal. Among the most active of these **Independents** were Penry, Barrowe, and Greenwood. Their principal mode of propagating their opinions was by a series of pamphlets, of which two, called "*Martin-Marprelate*," gave a generic title to the rest. They were attacks upon bishops and clergy and the Church and its ordinances, written with great spirit and considerable ability, and with a coarse scurrility which made them very popular; they included also attacks on civil authority which were not less than seditious. A secret press, removed from place to place, printed these pamphlets, which were very largely circulated and read with avidity. It is not surprising, considering the harshness of the laws and the

temper of the times, that Penry was arrested, tried under 25 Eliz. c. 1, and executed (1593).

The accession of **James** to the throne of England awoke new hopes in those who were dissatisfied with the state of the Church in England. His personal bringing up, in the straitest school of Puritanism, his official conformity to the Scottish Kirk, modelled on the lines of the Genevan polity, raised the expectation that the new king would favour the Calvinistic school in England. The result of forcing Puritan doctrine and discipline with harshness upon an unwilling mind had not been sufficiently taken into account. While on his journey southward a petition was presented to the king called the **Millenary Petition**, because it was intended to be signed by a thousand ministers, "though there wanted some hundreds to complete the number,"<sup>1</sup> on the services, and on ministers and their maintenance, and on discipline. The king commanded a conference to be held between the two parties who divided the Church, represented by certain bishops and divines on one side and some of the leading Nonconformist ministers on the other. The conference, held in the presence of the king and certain of his privy council, from the place of meeting is known as the **Hampton Court Conference**. It is a little surprising that the objections raised against the Church were so unimportant and so feebly supported; the objectors seem to have abandoned the more serious positions taken up by Cartwright, and only asked for an explanation of some ambiguous things in a more decidedly Calvinistic sense, for some ritual modifications, such as the disuse of the ring in marriage, of sponsors, and the sign of the cross in baptism, and for leave for those who pleased to

<sup>1</sup> Collier, *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*.

disuse the clerical habit and vestments. The bishops noted a few of the objections which had been made to the Prayer Book, and made a few modifications in accordance with them, and at the same time took the opportunity to add a prayer for the royal family, the thanksgivings for special occasions, and the latter part of the catechism on the Sacrament. The king issued a proclamation stating the result of the conference : that he and the council had found strong remonstrances supported by slender proofs, and no sufficient reason for any changes in those things most clamoured against ; wherefore he enjoined a general conformity.

The Parliament passed an Act (1 Jac. I. c. 3) disabling the crown from receiving conveyances of episcopal estates ; “thus the king stopped the issue of sacrilege and delivered himself from the importunity of courtiers.”

The Convocation summoned with this Parliament passed a Book of Canons which was afterwards ratified by the king’s consent. These canons of 1603 are a witness to the opinions of that period, and are still legally in force, except where expressly repealed ; the change of time and circumstances has left many of them obsolete. A few months after the beginning of the new reign Whitgift died, and **Bancroft** was raised from London to the archiepiscopal See (1604 A.D.). Bancroft governed with vigour, and pressed for conformity with so much success, that the services of the Church were more solemnly performed, the fasts and festivals better observed, the use of copes revived and the surplice worn, and things generally brought back to the first settlement under Elizabeth. About forty-nine clergymen were deprived for refusing the Prayer Book and canons. These continued their agitation by the publication of a pamphlet



entitled the **Abridgement** and others, and kept alive the dissenting opposition.

Some zealots of the Papist party, seeing their last hopes destroyed by the accession of James, conceived a plot to blow up the king, his two sons, and the two Houses of Parliament, and to lay the plot upon the Puritans ; to proclaim Elizabeth, the king's little daughter, as queen, and so by degrees bring back Popery upon the kingdom. This **Gunpowder Plot** was discovered, several of the conspirators executed, and the general horror of the intended atrocity served to alienate the public mind still further from any lingering sympathies with the Pope's adherents.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *THE TRIUMPH OF THE PURITANS*

**Charles I.**—The Tudor absolutism had been mitigated in the reign of a popular female sovereign ruling through wise and prudent ministers ; it fell into ill odour in the hands of the first Stuart, who used extravagant language about the divine right of kings, but ruled by unworthy favourites, feebly, and above all unsuccessfully. A strong and widespread desire had gradually grown up in the time of James for constitutional checks upon the power of the crown and for guarantees of the liberties of the subject.

At the same time, in the sphere of religion a reaction had set in against the dominant Calvinist theology in favour of the principles of the earlier phase of the Reformation, and by the end of James's reign the reaction was rapidly spreading among the people, and its leaders were beginning to obtain positions of influence in the Church ; notably Laud, its ablest representative, had been promoted to the episcopacy. Charles I. came to the throne (1625 A.D.) when these opposite principles in Church and State were about to enter upon a great contest for the ascendancy.

Charles possessed considerable learning, political ability, and good intentions ; he began his reign by continuing his father's policy with his father's minister, Buckingham ;

but on summoning Parliament, he soon found that it was no longer content to play the subordinate part to which it had been reduced in previous reigns, that of granting supplies and passing the bills prepared by the king's ministers; it was resolved to exercise an efficient control over the royal power. Three successive Parliaments were summoned, only to be speedily dissolved. Then the king, with the Earl of Strafford and Laud, by that time archbishop, for his ministers, resolved to rule without a Parliament; using irregular, not to say illegal, modes of raising necessary funds. The experiment lasted for eleven years (1629-1640), when the king was obliged to recognise its failure.

Laud was all the while the leader of the High Church reaction against Puritanism. When raised to the archbishopric (1633 A.D.), he carried out, in concert with Neale, Archbishop of York, a general metropolitical visitation for the purpose of promoting the observance of Prayer Book and canons. He met with a stubborn resistance in many places, and had to proceed against some of the Puritan clergy in the court of High Commission, which coerced the offenders by suspension or deprivation. A cry was raised against him that he was secretly bent on restoring the Papal authority; it was utterly untrue, but the dread of Rome made the masses suspicious and unreasonable. Laud tried to counteract this move of his opponents by citing three of them, Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, before the Star Chamber (1637), where he made an able explanation and defence of his ecclesiastical policy, to which people gave no heed, and the condemnation of the accused to the pillory for their slanders simply had the effect of causing them to be regarded as martyrs.

In justice to Charles, it must be remembered that he had inherited the state system of the Tudors, and that under that system England had become great and prosperous ; and that the English nation was the first to assert the principles of constitutional government, which all civilised nations have since more or less adopted. It is possible to sympathise very honestly with both sides. It is possible to sympathise with the king, who, conscious of his intention to rule wisely and well, found his government thwarted and embarrassed, and was alarmed at the new spirit and the new claims, which threatened to disorganise all government, to enfeeble the kingdom in its foreign relations, and endanger its domestic quiet and prosperity. It is possible to sympathise with the spirit of the English people, which was resolved no longer to leave its liberties to the chance of the good or bad disposition of the sovereign, but to secure constitutional guarantees for personal freedom and good government.

Affairs came to a crisis when the Scots broke out into rebellion (1640 A.D.), invaded England, and seized Newcastle. The king summoned another Parliament to vote measures for meeting the emergency ; but Parliament saw its opportunity in the king's extremity, and still resolutely persisted in discussing grievances before voting supplies. The king and his advisers seemed at length to have recognised the character of the political situation, and to have made up their minds to yield to the nation's demands. Parliament was dissolved ; the king summoned a Council of Peers at York, and consented to adopt constitutional principles, and made a treaty with the Scots ; then he summoned a fifth Parliament with the intention of settling a constitutional compromise. The **Long Parliament** met November 3, 1640.

The king's ministers were sacrificed to the popular anger. Strafford and Laud were ordered into custody and sent to the Tower. In the first session the king formally abandoned the encroachments which he had made upon the rights and liberties of the subject, and granted concessions which made those rights and liberties more ample, better defined, and more secure than ever before. "There was not a public or private grievance," says Hume, "but what was redressed within the first nine months of the meeting of the Parliament."

Many of the most patriotic of those who had been alienated by the arbitrary measures of the earlier part of the reign now rallied to the side of the king. The several parties in Church and State had made the alliances which were natural. The High Church party had allied themselves with the party of the king; the Puritan party had allied themselves with Parliament and advocated the kindred Presbyterian form of government in the Church. The nation was divided into two camps, the king and Church on one side, and on the other the Parliament and Presbyterians. The king had made the fatal mistake in policy of assenting to a bill enacting that the Parliament should not be dissolved except by its own consent, and had thus elevated the Parliament into a rival power in the kingdom with which henceforward he had to deal; and it soon became evident that the Parliamentary-Presbyterian party was prepared to go to the length of civil war to attain its ends.

The civil history of the time must be referred to for a narrative of the civil war; it is only the religious part of the lamentable strife which can be outlined here.

Three days after the meeting of Parliament the House of Commons formed itself into a **Committee of Religion**,

and relegated the business to a sub-committee, who set themselves vigorously to work to purge the Church of "scandalous ministers." This committee appointed sub-committees in every county, and a paper was issued inviting "all ingenuous persons in every county of the kingdom to be very active to improve the present opportunity." Afterwards other papers were published setting forth that "it is found by sad experience that parishioners are not forward to complain of their ministers," and paid agents were therefore appointed to go about and get up accusations against them—a trade which was vulgarly called "parson-hunting." The accusation of two or three "aggrieved parishioners," or even of one, was enough to put a clergyman on his trial before one of the committees. The accusation was not required to be proved on oath. Conformity to the doctrines and ritual of the "Laudian School," attachment to the royal party, were offences under the name of "malignity;" to these were often added charges of immorality of various kinds, a common device with the assailants of clergymen, as calculated to make them odious in the sight of men; as Dugdale says, "their enemies put this charge upon them, as the ancient pagans put skins of wild beasts on the holy martyrs, to make the dogs worry them."

These earlier proceedings against the clergy (1640–1643), Baxter, himself a Puritan, says drove out half the clergy, leaving half who could do neither good nor harm. To complete the story here, many of the latter half were driven out later, as the various parts of the country came under the power of the Parliament (1643–1649), for refusing to take "**the Covenant**," which required them to destroy Prelacy (*i.e.*, the Episcopal form of church government), and to support the Parliament against the king. In all, it is estimated that about 8000

of the clergy were ejected from their benefices. Their fate was various. Some, to avoid ill-treatment and imprisonment, fled and hid themselves or went abroad. Others less fortunate were arrested and imprisoned. When the jails were filled, hulks were used as places of imprisonment. There was talk at one time of relieving the overcrowded prisons by selling the prisoners to the American plantations or to the Algerines. Rigby, a member of Parliament, twice brought before Parliament a motion that they should be sold. What became of the majority is unknown, but this fact is full of significance, that on the Restoration, when the ejected clergy returned to their livings, there were only 800 left out of the 8000 to claim their own again.<sup>1</sup>

In January 1641 commissioners were appointed by Parliament to deface and remove all images and superstitious ornaments in churches. There are some details on record of the way in which these commissioners destroyed sculptured screens, sepulchral monuments, stained windows, and other monuments of antiquity. On December 30, the Bishops being prevented by the mob from attending the House of Lords, issued a protest against anything done in their absence. The House of Commons took advantage of it as a pretext for arresting them and sending them to the Tower. On February 14, 1642, the Bishops were deprived of their seats in the House of Lords. On April 15 the Parliament usurped the powers of government and proceeded to raise money and troops. August 22, the King raised his standard at Nottingham and the **Civil War** began. It extended over

<sup>1</sup> In all the history of the Church of England there is not so lamentable a chapter as that which records the details of this bitter persecution. It will be found in Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy."

the next nine years, included seven great battles and innumerable minor engagements, and filled the country with confusion and misery. During the winter Parliament entered into a **Solemn League and Covenant** with the Scots, which pledged them to mutual defence, and bound all who subscribed to it to extirpate Popery, Prelacy, superstition, heresy, and schism, and to support the cause of the Parliament. All holders of office in Church and State were required to "take the Covenant," and those who refused were deprived.

On February 2, 1643, an **Assembly of Divines** was nominated by Parliament to consult and advise on matters of religion; it was the Presbyterian substitute for the old Convocation. The Independents pleaded before this Assembly for the toleration of their worship, and were refused; the object of the Puritan party was not toleration, but the general enforcement of their own opinions. When the Independents published an Apology and requested leave not to be compelled to communicate in the churches of their parishes, but to be at liberty to form congregations of their own, the Assembly of Divines replied, that "to gather churches out of true churches is repugnant to the Word of God," that it "would encourage perpetual schism and division in the Church, always drawing off from the existing churches," and "thus would give rise to misunderstandings and animosities." When the Independents offered to maintain occasional communion, the Presbyterians replied, that "if the Independents can occasionally attend their worship and communicate with them, they cannot see why they should not do it always, and so separation and church gathering would be unnecessary." When conscientious scruples were pleaded, the divines answered that "by parity of reasoning the Church might be broken into as many



subdivisions as there are different scruples in the minds of men."

In order to supply the places of the ejected clergy, in 1623 a Parliamentary ordinance empowered certain members of the Assembly of Divines to examine and ordain candidates for the ministry and license them to preach. In the following year this power was extended to the classical presbyteries (see p. 174) within their respective boundaries; and in the following year an ordinance forbade unordained men to preach.

1645, August 24, St. Bartholomew's Day, a Parliamentary ordinance came into force which abolished the Book of Common Prayer and required the **Directory of Public Worship** to be used in all churches. The Directory was to be observed under a penalty of 40s. for each omission, and who ever spoke against the Directory was to be fined not less than £5 nor more than £50. The Directory gave only general rules; prescribed the heads of prayer before sermon, leaving the language to the minister; and the method of the sermon, where the minister was allowed by the Presbytery to preach; in the prayer after sermon some of its more useful heads were directed to be turned into petitions. The dead were to be buried without any prayer or religious ceremony; the forms for matrimony, visitation of the sick, and some other occasions were left to the discretion of the minister. The penalty for using the Prayer Book, either in public or in private, was £5 for the first offence, £10 for the second, and a year's imprisonment for the third.

1646, October. Episcopacy was abolished by Parliament.

1647. The king put himself into the hands of the Scottish army, which sold him to Parliament for

£200,000. Parliament desired to make a treaty with the king which would have given England a government by Parliament with a king under it, and would have settled the Presbyterian form of church government and Calvinistic doctrine as the Established Church; but the negotiations came to nothing through the king's refusal to sacrifice the constitution and doctrine of the Church to the demands of the Presbyterian party. It is this fact, that Charles's steadfast maintenance of the Church cost him his crown and his life, which seemed to the Church of after times to justify his commemoration in the Church's calendar as "king and martyr." "No candid reader," says Hallam, "can doubt that a serious sense of obligation was predominant in Charles's persevering fidelity to the English Church." The attempt to blast the king's character with a charge of untrustworthiness in these negotiations was a politic device of his enemies; Hume and Hallam both acquit him of the charge.

The Parliament became alarmed at the attitude of some of the principal officers of the army, and proposed to disperse the danger by disbanding the army; but the principal officers formed themselves into a council, assured themselves of the adhesion of their regiments, and then seized the king's person, marched on London, excluded from the House of Commons the members unfriendly to their cause, and made themselves masters of the situation.

1649, January 29. The king was executed, in spite of the remonstrances of the Presbyterian ministers. Parliament abolished monarchy and the House of Lords, and elected a Council of State.

1653. Cromwell at the head of the army was master of the situation; he turned the "Rump Parliament" by

force out of the House, and formed a Council of State of which he was chief. A Parliament of his own nominees—the Barebones Parliament—offered him the government for life with the title of Lord Protector.

Cromwell found it as difficult to govern with a factious Parliament as Charles had done, and solved the difficulty in a similar way by ruling without a Parliament. He divided the country into districts, over each of which he placed a Major-General as the representative and agent of his own absolute authority; the church and crown lands, the sequestered estates of the Royalists, arbitrary taxes, and the tenth levied from the incomes of Royalists brought in abundant supplies; and the Parliament and the Presbytery, as well as the monarchy and the Church, lay powerless under the heel of the fanatical soldier. In the regulation of religious matters he tolerated all the sects except Papists and Quakers, and appointed a Commission of Tryers to reject all ministers presented to livings whom it considered unfit, and another Commission of Ejectors to turn out the unfit who were already in possession of livings. “Episcopalians” were rigidly proscribed. The payment of tithes was still enforced, though of course for the most part they were paid by churchmen for the support of sectarian ministers.

## CHAPTER XX

### *THE RESTORATION*

As soon as it was seen that the Restoration was resolved upon, the chief representatives of the old Presbyterian and Puritan party skilfully seized the opportunity, by sending some of their number to Breda, to offer their assurances of loyalty to Charles, and to seek to obtain promises for the future. They requested the king not to have the Prayer Book used in his chapel, and that the use of the surplice might be discontinued by his chaplains. The king replied that he would not be restrained himself while others had so much indulgence; that he had retained the usages of the Church in which he was bred during his exile, and that he would not abet irregularity by his own practice, nor discountenance its ancient and laudable customs. He referred to the wisdom of Parliament to decide what indulgence and toleration might be necessary for the repose of the kingdom.

No hasty measures were taken. **An Act of Parliament restored their estates to the crown and the bishops**; the ejected clergy, the few of them (about 800) who survived, were reinstated in their benefices; the rest of the men in actual possession of benefices were left undisturbed until some general settlement of religion should be arrived at. To conciliate the Puritan party, the king

nominated some of its leading men as his chaplains, and Calamy, Reynolds, and Baxter were offered bishoprics, and three others deaneries. Reynolds only accepted the offer, and was made Bishop of Norwich.

Then, after the precedent set by James, the king summoned representatives of the two parties to a conference, which from the place where it assembled was called the **Savoy Conference**. The objections of the Nonconformists and the answers of the Church divines were conducted in writing and are on record. They show that, as at the Savoy Conference, the objections were of two kinds: some were objections to things in the Prayer Book embodying Church principles which the Church divines could not in conscience give up; others were small criticisms of the wording of the prayers, &c., which were hardly worthy of serious debate. Perhaps one of the most interesting incidents of the Conference was that Baxter, with a few weeks' labour, composed a new Prayer Book, which, however, his own friends declined to adopt. The final result was the adoption by the Bishops of some of the amendments suggested, none of which are of sufficient importance to need mention here. The work of revision of the Prayer Book was committed to the Convocations with the recommendation of these amendments. The result was the Book of Common Prayer, which has descended without further alteration, (except as to the "State Services" and Calendar) to our own day.

The re-settlement of religion was formally completed by the **Act of Uniformity**, May 19, 1662, which legalised the Prayer Book as revised by the Convocations. The men who had been left all this while undisturbed in the benefices of the Church had the option given them to conform before the next St. Bartholomew's day (August

24) or to retire from their usurped benefices. The great majority conformed and remained. The number who refused and were ejected is variously stated. Calamy states it at 2000, but only names 523; Baxter says 1800; more modern authorities (Curteis, Bampton Lectures, 1871) say that the number was about 800. Much has been said from that day to this of the intolerance and cruelty of the ejection of the **"two thousand Nonconformist ministers,"** but it must be considered who and what they were. The majority of them had been intruded into the benefices of the Church of England when the Church was proscribed and persecuted; some of them were undoubtedly men of learning and piety, and it is a subject of regret that they could not see their way to waive their objections; but some of them must have been the Independents and Baptists and "illiterate mechanic preachers" of whom the Presbyterian Edwardes complains; and while we respect them for their refusal to abandon their principles and sympathise with their sufferings for conscience-sake, we must recognise that the Church could not allow them to continue to minister at her altars and preach in her pulpits while they repudiated her constitution and doctrine. The complaint of the orthodox side was that so many were allowed to become ministers of the Church who were in their hearts opposed to her doctrines and discipline. A comparison of the ejection and persecution of the orthodox clergy in the early part of the story with the consideration with which the intruders were treated at the Restoration is one of which Church people have no reason to be ashamed.

The subsequent measures taken against the Nonconformists during this reign were the work of Parliament rather than of the Church, and were due to political as

well as to religious motives. It must be borne in mind that the Royalist laity had suffered bitterly from the harshness of the dominant Puritans, and both Royalists and Presbyterians from the tyranny of the Cromwellian Independents; and that all sober-minded people were sincerely shocked by the licentious fanaticism which had emerged from the confusion; and that what the nation earnestly desired was a cessation from religious as from civil strife. It was the "Cavalier Parliament" which refused to pass an Act recognising as lawful the dispensing power, which the king conceived to be inherent in him, and so enabling him to mitigate the rigour of the Act of Uniformity. It was the same Parliament which passed the **Conventicle Act**, suppressing by a severe ascending scale of penalties unlawful assemblies for religious worship. Besides the objection to tolerate dissenting assemblies for public worship, it was probably feared that such assemblies might be made centres of political as well as religious association. In contrast, however, with the Puritan prohibition of the use of the Prayer Book even in private, families were not now forbidden to have worship in any form they pleased, only there must not be more than four strangers present. Another Parliament in the same spirit passed the **Five Mile Act**, which forbade an ejected minister from coming within that distance of a borough town or of a place in which he had held the position of a minister, unless he would swear not to attempt to alter the existing settlement of Church and State.

In 1672 the king risked his popularity by acting on the dispensing power which he claimed, and issuing a **Declaration of Indulgence**, which suspended all penal laws in matters ecclesiastical, thus giving complete liberty to Romanists as well as Dissenters. It was

strongly suspected that the measure was intended to favour the former, for the king's brother and heir, James, Duke of York, had lately (1671) avowed himself a pervert. The people became alarmed; the Houses of Parliament strongly opposed the legality of the declaration; and the king prudently withdrew it. Parliament then passed the **Test Act**, which required that no one should hold office who refused to "take the test"—that is, to make a declaration of disbelief in the doctrine of transubstantiation and to receive the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. The Duke of York surrendered the office of Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Clifford his office of Lord High Treasurer, and every honest Romanist was deprived of office. Many Nonconformists made no difficulty of occasional conformity, which was held to be a sufficient compliance with the law.

In 1677 Parliament passed an Act abolishing the statute *de heretico comburendo*, and the oath *ex officio*, which compelled men to become their own accusers, and an Act forbidding the **profanation of the Lord's Day**.

The revival of the English Reformation in the Stuart period had raised up a school of learned and eloquent divines, as Hammond, Sanderson, Jeremy Taylor, South, Butler, Pearson; some of the works of these **Caroline divines** have been among the most valued authorities of Anglican theology ever since. The period also produced a strain of sober but exalted piety among both clergy and laity.



## CHAPTER XXI

### *THE REVOLUTION*

**James II.** (1668) came to the throne with a firm resolve to use his power to the utmost on behalf of his religion. The lessons of the previous half century seem to have been lost upon him. He seems to have confidently believed that he could carry out his design by the use and abuse of the royal prerogative ; forgetting that his father had tried that method of government, and it had landed him in civil war ; that his brother had experimented in that direction, and found it prudent to retreat ; and failing to understand that a generation which had learned and practised the principles of constitutional government was little likely to submit to a return to the methods of arbitrary power.

The two weapons on which the king relied were the **Royal Supremacy** and the **Dispensing Power**. The dispensing power he assumed to be inherent in the crown, and to give him the right, not indeed to abrogate laws, but to dispense with their execution in individual cases at his discretion. The supremacy gave him disciplinary jurisdiction over the Church ; and his right of nomination to bishoprics and other dignities, and the dispensing power to excuse his nominees from all tests and obligations, put great influence into his hands.

His first step was to maintain the small army which

had been raised to meet Monmouth's rebellion and to appoint Romanists as its officers. These appointments were a violation of the Test Act, but the king dispensed the officers from the obligation to take the test. Parliament remonstrated, and the king prorogued it, and proceeded to obtain a legal recognition of the validity of his dispensation. When the judges were sounded, it appeared that four were opposed to the legality of the king's action; but the judges were in those days appointed during the king's pleasure; so the four were removed and others put in their places. Then a collusive action was brought against one of the Romanist officers for refusing the test; he pleaded the king's dispensation; and the judges decided that such dispensations freed those who received them from any penalties imposed by any laws whatsoever (1686). The way was now clear.

The king appointed an Ecclesiastical Commission Court, which was a revival of the Court of High Commission abolished among the surrenders of Charles I. to constitutional ideas in 1641. At its head he put the infamous Jeffries; the three bishops placed upon it were Sancroft the archbishop, and Spratt and Crewe, two men who were willing to be the king's tools. Sancroft declined to act, and was banished from the king's court. The court suspended Compton, Bishop of London, for refusing to take proceedings against Sharpe, rector of St. Giles, for preaching against Popery. The king proceeded boldly and openly; he appointed Father Petre and two other Romanists to the Privy Council; made a Romanist judge; sent an ambassador to Rome, and received a Papal nuncio and three Roman bishops *in partibus*; set up a Popish service at St. James's, where a colony of Benedictine monks was placed;

Jesuits at the Savoy, Franciscans at Lincoln's Inn, and Carmelites in the city. Roman chapels were commenced, processions were seen in the streets. Obadiah Walker, the Master of University College and several Fellows of other colleges turned Romanists, and received from the king dispensations to retain their positions. Sclater, vicar of Putney, turned Romanist, and received a dispensation to retain his living. The king imposed a Popish principal at Christ Church, Oxford, who turned one of the college rooms into a chapel and set up the mass. He turned out the Fellows of Magdalen because they refused to elect his Popish nominee, and had his own man introduced by force. He ordered the University of Cambridge to confer the M.A. degree upon a Benedictine monk without exacting the oaths, and deprived the Vice-Chancellor for non-compliance. He packed the corporations, so as to secure a House of Commons which would be subservient to him, and proposed to swamp the opposition in the Lords by new creations.

At length, April 4, 1687, he issued a **Declaration of Liberty of Conscience**, suspending all laws against Romanists and Dissenters alike, and giving them permission to worship publicly. The inclusion of Dissenters was intended to secure their support. In 1688 another **Declaration of Indulgence** was issued, which the king commanded to be read in all the churches. The bishops who happened to be in London met at Lambeth and drew up a petition in which they begged to be excused from publication of the Declaration, on the ground that it was founded on a dispensing power which had often been declared illegal in Parliament, and that they could not in prudence, honour, or conscience so far make themselves parties to it as the

solemn publication of it in time of divine service would amount to.

The seven bishops who thus stood in the gap were W. Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, W. Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, F. Turner, Bishop of Ely, J. Lake, Bishop of Chichester, T. Kenn, Bishop of Bath and Wells, T. White, Bishop of Peterborough, and J. Trelawney, Bishop of Bristol.

The bishops sought an audience and presented their petition. The king read it with surprise. "These are strange words," he said; "I did not expect this from you. This is a standard of rebellion." Then, in reply to their protestations of loyalty, "God has given me this dispensing power, and I will maintain it. I tell you there are 7000 men, and of the Church of England too, that have not bowed the knee to Baal." No doubt the time-serving compliance of three or four prelates might encourage the king to hope for the yielding of the rest; but when Bishop Spratt began to read the declaration on the appointed Sunday in Westminster Abbey, the congregation rose in a body and streamed out of the building. Only about 200 of the clergy out of about 9000 read it; the rest abided the result of their refusal.

The king was right in regarding the action of the bishops as a standard of resistance, and he accepted the battle on this point, and the whole nation looked on with interest. The bishops were summoned before the Council on a charge of misdemeanour and sedition, and, on their declining to give bail, as inconsistent with their privilege as peers of Parliament, were committed to the Tower. The people understood the importance of the occasion. Crowds assembled to witness their embarkation on the barge which was to convey them to the Tower, some in tears, some kneeling to

ask their blessing, many crying "God save the bishops," "God save the Church." On their arrival at the Tower, their reception was still more striking; the men on guard, and even some of the officers, received them kneeling and asked their blessing.

On their trial at Westminster Hall, vast crowds filled the building and the neighbouring spaces. The sentence of acquittal was received with a tremendous burst of applause in the hall, which was taken up outside, and soon announced the news to the whole capital, and the news was conveyed by mounted messengers to all parts of the kingdom. The news reached Hounslow while James was reviewing the army encamped there, on which he was relying to support him in the last resort; they too broke into joyful shouts. James asked "what it meant." Nothing, he was told, "only the soldiers are glad that the bishops are acquitted." "So much the worse for them," threatened the king.

But by this time the spirit of the whole nation had been roused against the king's arbitrary acts, which clearly pointed to a forcible re-establishment of the Popish tyranny. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and the influx of French Huguenots fleeing from the cruel persecution which followed, no doubt helped to alarm the people as to the results of a restoration of the Papal power, backed by the tyranny of a king like James. On the day of the acquittal of the seven bishops, a deputation of seven men of rank and political eminence, carrying with them the invitation of many others, formally invited William, Prince of Orange, who had married Mary, the king's eldest daughter, to come over with an armed force to defend the liberties of England, with the offer of the crown. James found himself deserted by his subjects and fled. A Convention

Parliament declared the throne vacant, and offered the crown to William and Mary as joint sovereigns.

**The Nonjurors.**—The mere fact of the accession of William and Mary to the throne by the vote of the Convention Parliament was the occasion of an important episode in the history of the Church. It was convenient to accept the king's flight from the kingdom as a practical abdication, but in fact he had not formally abdicated; on the contrary, he shortly appeared at the head of an army in Ireland, to contest what he regarded as the usurpation of the Prince of Orange.

When the holders of all offices in the kingdom were called upon to take an oath of allegiance to the new sovereigns, it appeared that some of the bishops and clergy had conscientious scruples; they were willing to accept William and Mary as *de facto* sovereigns, but they scrupled to take oaths of allegiance to them while James still claimed adherence to the oath which they had previously sworn to him, and a large number of the laity sympathised with them. The bishops who entertained this scruple were for the most part the very same whose resistance to James's declaration of indulgence had raised the standard of resistance to the abuse of the royal prerogative, so that their action stood above suspicion of any other than the highest motives and secured for them the general sympathy.

The king offered a compromise, viz., to excuse the clergy from the oath on condition that they would assent to the repeal of the tests of churchmanship required from all who held civil office. It must be borne in mind that William was bred a Presbyterian and was from conviction a latitudinarian, and that he was naturally anxious for a large measure of comprehension. The compromise was not generally acceptable. The

Church and nation as a whole were not yet prepared to abandon the principle that whatever toleration might be extended to Dissenters, national interests required that the holders of any office should be adherents of the existing unity in Church and State. The court party had sufficient power to procure the passing of an Act of Parliament enacting that all clergymen who refused the oath of allegiance should be deprived. Under this Act the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops were ejected, and about 400 clergymen, among whom were a remarkable number of men eminent for learning and piety; the names of some of them, as Hicks, Collier, Dodwell, Kettlewell, Sherlock, are still well known as ecclesiastical authors of repute. It was a critical moment. Great numbers both of the clergy and laity sympathised with the Nonjurors, and had any attempt been made to force on the Church such changes in constitution and doctrine as those projected in the Bill of Comprehension and for the Repeal of Tests, a very serious disruption of the Church might have resulted. But the advisers of William were prudent men; they recognised that no real comprehension and pacification could be obtained by measures which, while they admitted a few Dissenters, excluded a great body of churchmen. On the other hand, the Nonjurors, with praiseworthy moderation, were content to suffer in silence and patience the hardships which their obedience to conscience had brought upon them. The larger and better part of them made no attempt to create a schism, and they said nothing against their brethren who had not scrupled to take the oath. Since their expulsion was an act of the secular power, and they had not been canonically deprived, some conscientious men scrupled to take their offices as not vacant; but they said no

bitter things against those who did take them, and they encouraged their sympathisers to accept things as they stood. Some did not fall in with these moderate counsels, and an attempt was made to keep up a Nonjuring succession of bishops and priests ; but, discountenanced by the rest, it gradually died of neglect.

The principal result of the secession of the Nonjurors was that it deprived the Church of the ablest representatives of the conservative Reformation just at the time when they were needed to balance a new "school of thought" which had been growing up for some time past and which was soon to acquire, under the patronage of the crown, an influence disproportioned to its numbers. It was soon known by the name of the **Low Church** party. Its doctrines had been published by Hales and Chillingworth in the time of Charles I. ; soon after the Restoration it began to gain numerous adherents ; and with the Revolution it came into power. The ejection of the archbishop and six other bishops left vacancies which William filled up with men of the Low Church—some of them were men of learning, ability, and piety, as Tillotson, Burnet, Stillingfleet, Tenison—with the result that the bench of bishops as a whole was no longer in harmony with the great body of the clergy or with the national religious feeling. The new school was averse from enthusiasm and extremes, and was content to accept things as they stood. It accepted the Church as the existing organisation of religion in England, and not contrary in any way to the Word of God, and therefore having a claim upon the adhesion of all reasonable men. But while preferring the doctrine and discipline of the Church, it was tolerant of dissent in every orthodox form, and not averse from making considerable concessions to Dissenters, if by so



doing it could attain the desirable end of inducing them to abandon their separatist organisations. This spirit of tolerance led in many cases to latitudinarianism, and in some leaned towards Socinianism.

The immediate practical result of the new appointments to the episcopate was that it put **the bench of bishops in antagonism with both the Lower House of Convocation and with Parliament.** When William summoned his first Parliament, he omitted to summon Convocation at the same time, which was a breach of the constitution. On the petition of Parliament he was obliged to repair the omission; and Convocation, especially the Lower House, took a large part in the subsequent business. At the same time that the king summoned the Convocation a Comprehension Bill was introduced into Parliament which had not received any Convocational assent. It proposed to excuse ministers from signing the Thirty-nine Articles; to recognise Presbyterian ordination; to make certain ceremonies optional, as the use of the surplice, the cross in baptism, sponsors, kneeling at the reception of the Communion; and it proposed to petition the crown for the revision of the liturgy and canons, and the reform of the ecclesiastical courts. It was the last great endeavour to revolutionise the Church of England in accordance with the personal predilections of the sovereign, and happily it was unsuccessful.

The proposals excited great and almost universal alarm among Church people. Macaulay estimates that nine-tenths of the clergy were opposed to them, and that probably represents nine-tenths of the people. The public alarm was justified and intensified by the fact that in Scotland, when the bishops scrupled to take the oath of allegiance, the mob had been allowed to "rabble"

the episcopal clergy without interference on the part of the authorities; the Scottish Parliament had been allowed to abolish Episcopacy, and the Presbyterian system had been re-established, with the king's consent. The English people very naturally began to fear that in escaping the Scylla of James and Popery, they had run into the Charybdis of William and latitudinarian Presbytery. The national feeling was so strong that the king found it prudent to abandon his design.

The utmost which he was able to obtain from Parliament was the **Toleration Act** (1689, 1 Will. and Mary, c. 18), which permitted ministers of the three chief dissenting bodies—Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist—who should take the oath of allegiance and subscribe the thirty-six doctrinal articles out of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, to conduct public worship for their adherents without interference or penalties, and protected their worship from molestation. These "Orthodox Dissenters" were not only tolerated, but in a measure established; the magistrates registered and protected their places of worship, the king set aside a considerable annual sum—the *Regium Donum*—in stipends for them, and they were permitted to approach the crown by petition as a recognised body. In 1691 an attempt was made to unite the Presbyterians and Independents, but it came to nothing, and the latter body rapidly declined into Unitarianism.

The policy of the reign of **Queen Anne** (1702 A.D.) was to some extent a reaction against the ecclesiastical as well as political policy of the preceding reign. The latitudinarian policy of William, no longer supported by the court, was at a disadvantage in face of the opposite views of the great body of the clergy and the nation. The **trial of Dr. Sacheverell** (1710) afforded the popular

feeling an opportunity of manifesting itself. He was rector of St. Saviour's, Southwark, a man of no great learning or character, but with a striking presence, good delivery, and a fanatical preacher of the popular doctrines. In a sermon at St. Paul's before the Mayor and Corporation, he preached violently in favour of non-resistance, against the principle of toleration, declared the Church in danger, and abused Godolphin, the chief minister of the Whig cabinet. The ministry impeached him and brought him to trial. The event greatly moved the popular mind. When the queen passed through the streets, shouts were raised, "God bless your majesty and the Church. We hope your majesty is for Dr. Sacheverell." There were riotous attacks upon the Dissenters' chapels, some of which were burnt. The mild sentence of the House of Lords, that Sacheverell's sermon should be burnt, and that he should be silenced for three years, was regarded as a triumph, and the man was regarded as a popular hero. The display of national feeling hastened the fall of the Whig ministry; the Tory party came into office, and retained its ascendancy during the remainder of the queen's reign.

This reaction showed itself in the **Occasional Conformity Act** of 1711. It was regarded as a religious scandal, as well as a political grievance, that Dissenters should come to Holy Communion in church once a year merely to qualify themselves to hold municipal and other offices, and the Act put the test the other way; instead of taking such occasional conformity as an evidence of churchmanship, it enacted that those who had attended Dissenting public worship within the previous year should be reckoned Nonconformists. This was followed up by the **Schism Act** of 1714, which was directed against the seminaries for training Dissenting ministers, and against

some private schools conducted by eminent Dissenters with such success that the sons of some of the nobility and gentry were sent to them for education. The Act prohibited Nonconformists from keeping, or even being ushers in, schools.

The queen showed her good-will to the Church in a practical way by restoring to it the first-fruits and tenths which Henry VIII. had seized, which Mary had restored, which Elizabeth had resumed. They were wisely settled in a trust fund, under the title of **Queen Anne's Bounty**, for the augmentation of poor livings, which still continues its useful work.

## CHAPTER XXII

### *THE HANOVERIAN PERIOD*

WITH the accession of the House of Hanover a new era begins. The old High Church party lived on especially among the country clergy and gentry, and with it an inclination to the cause of the Stuart dynasty ; but the mass of the people were quite content to live in peace under the new regime. The Dissenters were conciliated by the repeal (1719) of the **Occasional Conformity Act** and the **Schism Act**, but the Test Act was retained. In religion men's thoughts were turning into new channels. The questions which were coming to the front concerned the very foundations of revealed religion. The **Bangorian controversy**, which raged about the Erastian, latitudinarian, and perhaps Socinian views ably put forward and defended by Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor (and successively of Hereford, Salisbury, and Winchester) marked the change. Then there sprung up a school of **Deistical writers**, who challenged the existence of any revelation. The chief of these were Shaftesbury in his "Characteristics ;" Woolston "On the Miracles ;" Toland, "Christianity not Mysterious ;" Collins, "On Free-Thinking ;" Tindal, "Christianity as Old as Creation." These called forth able replies, some of which have obtained the position of theological classics, as Warburton's "Divine Legation of Moses ;" Conybeare's "Defence of

"Revealed Religion," and Butler's "Analogy." The Deists were worsted in the discussion, and Christianity came out of the contest strengthened by the apologies which had been called forth on its behalf.

Then the **Socinian** views which had been simmering in men's minds found open expression in the **Arianism** of the works of Whiston and Clarke, and among Dissenters in those of Lardner and Priestley. Bishop Bull had already published his great work, *Defensio pro Symbolo Niceno*, against the foreign Socinians; the controversy was chiefly carried on by Waterland, Jones of Nayland, and Bishop Horsley, who did much to arrest the spread of error and to establish the orthodox faith in the public mind.

After so long a period of religious strife and controversy there followed a period of sluggish inactivity. There were admirable bishops, but the idea of the episcopal life was one of dignified representation, learned leisure, and mild rule of the "inferior clergy." In the rural districts the rectors were genial and charitable, half country squire and half parson; many parishes had no resident rector or vicar, and were served by stipendiary curates, and the religious life of the people was at a low ebb. In the towns the principal clergy were highly respected, and the better classes of the citizens were a church-going people; but it was hardly considered as part of their duty to create new machinery for the improvement of the social condition of the people, or to engage in systematic mission-work among the neglectors of religion. The Dissenting bodies were in much the same condition. "The Nonconformist ministers, comfortably established among their flocks, and enjoying their modest temporalities, shared the spiritual ease of churchmen"

(Macaulay). This was the state of things when a wave of religious zeal swept over the land, like that which gave birth to the Franciscan and Dominican orders in the thirteenth century, and began a new era, which has passed through various phases, and is still in full flood.

If the birth of the **Evangelical School** may be attributed to any one man, it may be assigned to William Law, the author of "A Serious Call to a Devout Life" and "Christian Perfection." These works had a great effect upon the mind of Henry Venn, who may be regarded as one of the earliest, and perhaps the most influential, of the Evangelical school, and also on that of John Wesley, the organiser of a separate branch of the revival which must be dealt with in a distinct paragraph. With Venn may be enumerated as early Evangelicals Samuel Walker of Truro, James Hervey, the author of the "Meditations in a Country Churchyard," and William Talbot of Reading. Later names of eminence are William Romaine, Joseph and Isaac Milner, John Newton, the poet Cooper, Richard Cecil, Thomas Scott the commentator, Leigh Richmond, Henry Martyn the missionary, Charles Simeon, John Thornton, the chief of the Clapham school, and William Wilberforce.

The revival was rather pietistic than doctrinal, but it did specially exalt those doctrines which immediately touch the relations between the individual soul and God. Its great merits were a profound veneration for the Bible, faith in the atonement, and an ardent personal sense of religion. Its defects lay in its individualism, its undervaluing of creeds, sacraments, worship, unity, and all which relates to Christ's church system of bringing religion to bear upon universal mankind.

The **Wesleyan movement** began within the Church, on High Church lines doctrinally, in the form of Societies—Guilds as we should now call them—for the cultivation of personal piety. At first they were members of the Church who were grouped into these local societies, but in a short time the popularity of the movement attracted people from outside the Church into the Wesleyan Societies, who were Wesleyans first and churchmen afterwards. With all its admitted excellence, the movement tended from the beginning in the direction of the formation of a separate religious organisation. The steps of this separation were these: the opening of the Foundry House in London and the building of the Preaching House at Bristol, both in 1739, were the beginning of the gathering of separate congregations. The permission, unwillingly given, by John Wesley to Maxwell, the first lay preacher, to preach in public in 1741 was the beginning of an unauthorised ministry. In 1788 the lay preachers were allowed to read the Prayer Book on Sunday mornings in their meeting-houses. In the very year of John Wesley's death (1790) he formally put forth the statement in his magazine, "I hold all the doctrines of the Church of England. I love her history, I approve her plan of discipline, and only wish it could be put in execution." Wesley would have kept his followers as an order within the Church, but for a long time previous to his death it was only his personal influence which had kept back the tendency of his followers to break off from the Church and exercise their entire independence as a separate organisation. In 1795 the governing body gave permission to the preachers to assume all the functions of the priesthood, to baptize, conduct public service, administer



"the Lord's Supper," and bury, and the schism was complete.

The same revival of religion which produced the Evangelical school and the Wesleyan society in connection with the Church roused the Dissenters into activity. Previously they were not numerous, about one to twenty of the population,<sup>1</sup> and they shared the general religious apathy. But three causes tended to their rapid increase: first, the rapid increase of the population and its sudden accumulation in the towns and manufacturing districts, and the failure of the Church to make sufficient provision for the spiritual wants thus suddenly created. Secondly, the facility with which Dissenters could erect cheap buildings and provide ministers for them. Thirdly, the fact that the whole drift of Evangelical teaching encouraged the people to see nothing but minor and very unimportant differences between the Church and the sects. It must be said in excuse for the Church of the time, that a great and ancient organisation is always inevitably cautious and slow in adapting itself to new circumstances; that, with its Convocation silenced for a century past, the Church had lost the machinery and the habit of united action; that the erection of a new church required a special Act of Parliament; and that it required years of education for its candidates for holy orders. The result was a **rapid increase in the number of Dissenters**. In the absence of a religious census it is impossible to give authoritative statistics, but from the latest sources of information it is gathered that the Wesleyans now number not more than 1,356,906 adherents in Great

<sup>1</sup> Sherlock in his "Test Act Vindicated" calculates that in 1676 Dissenters, including Romanists, were to the Church people in the proportion of 1 to 20, and that they had not increased during the first twenty-five years of the next century.

Britain; the Independents about 1,250,000; the Baptists less than 1,000,000; Romanists probably less than 2,000,000; the minor sects it is difficult to estimate. The proportion of the people who seek their religious ministrations at the hands of the Church is probably about 75 per cent. of the population; the population of England and Wales by the census of 1891 was 29 millions, and 75 per cent. of that is 21 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions.

With their increase in numbers and wealth the Dissenters naturally acquired political influence, and used it to free themselves from their legal disabilities. In 1774 an Act of Parliament relieved their ministers and schoolmasters from the subscription to the Articles of Religion required by the Toleration Act. In 1828 the **repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts** opened Parliament and all civil offices to them. In 1829, after long and profound agitation, the **Catholic Relief Act** extended the same liberty to Romanist dissenters. In 1836 the **Dissenters' Marriage Act** licensed Dissenting meeting-houses for the celebration of baptisms, marriages and funerals; the Act 3 and 4 Will. IV. c. 30 relieved their meeting-houses from local taxation. In 1858 the **repeal of the Jewish disabilities** admitted Jews to Parliament.

Then began a series of legislative assaults upon the Church which the political activity of the assailants and the pseudo-liberality and lethargy of Church people rendered successful. In 1869 an Act of Parliament gave them a share in the government of the Church's grammar-schools. In 1870 the Act 34 Vict. c. 26 gave them admission to the Church's colleges, and in 1882 another Act gave them a share in their emoluments and government; the colleges at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, founded to keep their students under the religious and moral discipline of the Church,

were thrown open to Dissenters, and the Church began at once to found new colleges for herself. In 1880 an Act gave Dissenting ministers the power of conducting their funeral services in the churchyards.

**The High Church Revival.**—In the earlier part of the nineteenth century there were still a few clergymen who had inherited the learning and the principles of the Caroline divines. The revival of the school of thought as one of the modern parties in the Church began in Oxford about 1825. It was a reaction against the defects of the Evangelical school, and its aim, as in the earlier phase of the sixteenth-century Reformation, was to bring the Church of England back to the primitive standards of faith and practice. The common room of Oriel College, Oxford, was the centre of the movement, and Newman, Pusey, Keble, Froude, Isaac Williams, Palmer, Wilberforce, were among its leaders. Their design of forming a Society having been discouraged by those in authority, it was chiefly by their writings that their principles were disseminated. Among those writings the "Tracts for the Times" were the most notorious; the publication of translations of the Fathers and of the works of the English theologians of the seventeenth century, had a still greater influence. At the same time began a revived interest in and admiration of mediæval art, and this led to the restoration of churches and the improvement of services; while the "Christian Year" of Keble, and collections of hymns, lent the aid of poetry to the popularising of the revival. The movement was at first misunderstood; it was feared that it was leading people back towards Rome; authorities looked disapprovingly upon it, partisans prosecuted it, the mob rabbled its clergy and services. The new leaven, however, gradually wrought, and has had a great

effect upon the popular religion of the latter part of the century. In so great a movement there were sure to be extremes, but the general result has been to extend and consolidate the work of the Evangelical revival, and to add to its piety and earnestness the theological learning and church organisation in which it was defective.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *THE MODERN PERIOD*

THE revival of the "High Church" school of thought, in the second quarter of the present century, seems to have inspired the Court of Rome with the hope that the time had come for recovering England to the Roman obedience, in forgetfulness perhaps of the fact that it was that school of thought which broke with the See of Rome in the time of Henry VIII., and which raised the standard of resistance to the attempt of James II. to bring the Church of England back into the old bondage.

In 1850 the Pope gave a new organisation to the Papal sect in England by the creation of a new hierarchy in the country, consisting of an archbishop, taking his title from Westminster, and twelve other bishops, taking their titles from other great towns.

This **Papal Aggression** was the outward advertisement of a new attack upon the Church of England. Rome gave itself in earnest to the task which it had undertaken. Money was supplied in profusion for the erection of beautiful churches and the maintenance of attractive services; convents of men and women were founded in various places; charitable institutions presented the religion in its most persuasive character; social influences were brought to bear upon individuals; in short, all that statesmanlike plan, skilful intrigue, Jesuitical astuteness,

and money, all that Christian earnestness, zeal, and self-devotion ably directed could do was done, in the hope of gaining a great body of converts, and thus of social influence and political power, and so of ultimately winning back England to the Roman obedience. In the early days of the movement it had a considerable success. A number of clergymen, some of them men of eminence for piety and learning, some of them dignitaries of the Church, were won over, and a rather large number of converts of the higher classes, and a certain number out of the poorer classes, who, having no religion, were naturally attracted by bright services and kindly ministrations; but the result on the whole has been a great disappointment. It soon appeared that High Churchmanship was not an easy introduction to Romanism, but its most formidable opponent, and that the strong popular prejudices against the old tyranny of Rome were not to be easily overcome.

Meantime the character of the party has changed; the genial Gallicanism of the "old Catholic families" has been replaced or overlaid with a fanatical aggressive Ultramontaniam. The new dogma of the **Immaculate Conception**, accepted by the Vatican Council in 1854, and of the **Papal Infallibility**, declared in 1870, have raised new barriers to the acceptance of modern Romanism by educated churchmen.

The controversy between the English Church and the Papacy has assumed a new phase. The Roman controversialists recognise that the strong point of the Church is its actual unbroken descent, through all the oscillations of the Reformation period, from the ancient Church, and they are devoting their best energies to prove that the descent failed on the accession of Parker to the See of Canterbury (see p. 168), and so to excuse the intru-

sion of a schismatical hierarchy as a replantation of a true succession in this country. That "the Italian Mission" has at least no claim to be the descendant and representative of the old unreformed English Church is made plain by the following facts.

1. The intrusive hierarchy is not descended from the bishops and clergy of the old Church. The bishops and priests who, on the death of Queen Mary, refused to conform to the reformed order made no attempt to keep up a succession; they died out and left no successors.

2. The ancient Church of England was not governed by Roman canon law ("What have I to do with a Roman canon?" asked Henry I., see p. 82), but by the canons made by its own English synods. The Papal sect is governed by Roman canon law, so far as that is not suspended by the absolute authority of the Pope.

3. The ancient Church of England had its own liturgy, which descended from the Ephesian family of the four great ancient liturgies; the Papal sect uses the modern Roman liturgy.

4. The doctrine which the Papal sect teaches is not that of the unreformed Church of England, but that doctrine as modified by the Council of Trent plus the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, plus the Papal Infallibility, and other modern accretions.

5. The *raison d'être* of the Papal sect in England is the assertion of the Papal supremacy; but the supremacy which it asserts is the modern theory that the Pope is by divine right the absolute ruler of the Church, and the infallible teacher of divine truth; which is a totally different thing from the patriarchal authority, carefully defined and limited, which the Church of England admitted at the Conquest, and, finding it abused, burdensome, and mischievous, threw off at the Reformation.

The most remarkable fact in the modern history of the Church of England is its **rapid extension over the world**, and its organisation into what is virtually a new patriarchat . When the American plantations declared their independence in 1776, there were numerous congregations of the Church of England there, but they were all under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. Laud had proposed in 1638 to send a bishop to New England, and Clarendon obtained the sanction of Charles II. to the establishment of a bishopric for Virginia; and Archbishop Tenison left a bequest for providing an American episcopate, but Walpole prevented its taking effect. In 1784, with the advice and assent of the English ecclesiastical authorities, the political and legal difficulties of the case were evaded by the consecration of Bishop Seabury at the hands of the bishops of the disestablished Scottish Church. Three years afterwards the legal difficulties were overcome, and the English Church consecrated bishops for several of the United States. In 1793 Canada was supplied with a bishop of its own, and in 1813 a bishop was consecrated for our Indian dominions.

But the great extension of the Anglican communion is the work of more recent times. The wonderful growth of our population led to the foundation of colonies in North America, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa, which developed with great rapidity. The Religious Societies helped the early colonists to build churches and schools, and provided them with clergymen, and at length completed their ecclesiastical organisation by the appointment of **Colonial Bishops**. The English Bench of Bishops made an appeal in 1841 to the nation for funds to provide bishops immediately for New Zealand, the British possessions in the Mediterranean,



New Brunswick, Cape of Good Hope, Van Diemen's Land, and Ceylon; they proposed afterwards to make similar provision for Sierra Leone, British Guiana, South Australia, Port Philip, Western Australia, Northern India and Southern India. Within sixteen years these Sees were founded and endowed by voluntary contributions; the work thus begun has been steadily continued, until the whole number of colonial and missionary bishoprics amounts to seventy-seven. The Sees of the Church of the United States meantime have grown to the number of seventy-one.

In 1867 the foundation was laid of the **organisation of all the Churches of the Anglican communion**. The first formal expression of a desire for it came from the Provincial Synod of Canada, and the bishops of the United States intimated that they would gladly take part in a general conference of Anglican bishops. There actually assembled at Lambeth in that year 78 out of a total of 144, viz., 18 English, 9 Irish, 7 Scottish, 23 from British Colonies, and 21 from the United States. The conference lamented "the divided condition of the flock of Christ throughout the world," and expressed "its solemn conviction that unity will be most effectually promoted by maintaining the faith in its purity and integrity as taught in the Holy Scriptures, held by the primitive Church, summed up in the true Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed general Councils." The conference passed a series of resolutions pointing in the direction of the complete organisation of the Church of England with the Churches of the Colonies and those of the United States into what would be a new patriarchate having the Archbishop of Canterbury as the centre of its organisation. The prospect is perhaps a little vague, but it is a very grand one. It is all but certain that the

Colonies will grow into great nations ; the United States will also continue to grow ; and the English-speaking peoples will exercise a great influence in the world of the future. Even if the Colonies, or some of them, should assert their political independence, after the example of the United States, still this ecclesiastical organisation will unite them with the rest of the Anglican communion for religious purposes, and will greatly help to bind all together in international unity. England is not only the pivot of this external machinery, it is the heart and brain of this spiritual organisation ; it behoves English churchmen to see that their soundness in the faith and holiness of character and spiritual energy are such as to fit them for the part which they are called upon to take. A glance back at the history of the Church will show how in ancient times, through the political and material depression of the East and the political and material growth of Europe, the centre of gravity of Christendom moved from the Greek to the Latin civilisation, from Constantinople to Rome ; the action of the same causes, the political and material depression of the European nations and the vigorous growth of the English-speaking nationalities, may cause a like transfer of the religious centre from the Latin to the Teutonic civilisation, from Rome to Canterbury. It has long since been pointed out (by Montalembert) that the English Church, holding fast to the faith and constitution of the primitive Church, and gladly embracing the results of the growth and development of the race, affords a centre round which divided Christendom might one day rally. The Churches of the East are already beginning to regard us with interest and sympathy ; the manhood of the Roman Churches is alienated and ripening for another Reformation. There is said to be

a strong and growing feeling in the Scotch Kirk in the direction of the primitive standards of organisation and creed.

Another most remarkable phenomenon of the religious condition of England is the **manifold divisions of our English Christianity**, the wonderful rapidity with which it is subdividing. Down to the beginning of this century the principal Dissenting bodies were the Presbyterians, Independents, Romanists, Baptists, Wesleyans, Friends. The census of 1851 enumerated 75 different denominations. The Registrar General's return of places licensed for divine worship gave in 1871 177 names of denominations; in 1886 this had increased to 213; in 1894 it was 273. This constant subdivision does not affect the whole population; about 75 per cent. of the population are reckoned as more or less Church people; the gross number of Dissenters, it is probable, does not increase in proportion to the population; but it is this minority of the population which is subject to the wonderful disintegration shown in the official returns. At the same time, there is reason to believe that there is a strong tendency among Dissenters to forsake the old standards of orthodoxy. The modern school of criticism has sapped the foundations on which they rested. It is said that there is a strong leaven of Socinianism among the Independents, and the Wesleyan authorities recently decided that baptism was not necessary for "membership" of their body.

Though the dissent of the country includes only a minority of the people, it is earnest, well organised, and exercises a political power and social influence which is enough to paralyse the religious action of the country as a whole. The Government can give no support or encouragement, or even countenance, to religion; in

setting up a system of National Education the whole country would desire it to be religious, but the Government is obliged to leave religion to take its chance, because it considers itself bound to neutrality among the different religious bodies.

The consular chaplains, who used to witness for the religion of the English wherever the consular flag witnessed to the political and commercial power of England, are withdrawn as inconsistent with the attitude of neutrality which the Government assumes amidst the contending sects.

Foreign Churches are frightened from the path of reform by the spectacle of the confusion which has resulted here. Intelligent heathens scornfully bid our missionaries to settle their religion among themselves before they offer it to the acceptance of other people.

All our Colonies have been founded in the modern period, and the people who founded them carried with them these unhappy religious divisions. The result is a great weakening of the power of Christianity wherever the English form of it prevails. So far as human judgment and foresight can venture to pronounce on such a question, the most important gain to the cause of Christ and His Church in the immediate future would be the reunion of English Christianity round the standard of the Historic Church.

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